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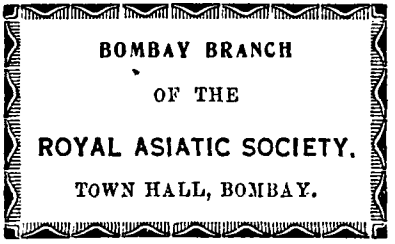

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CERVANTES

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CERVANTES

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INTRODUCTION.

THE two chief centres of the elder European civilisation, Italy and Spain, are each represented to the foreign world around them by one great writer. Both countries possess a literature of vast wealth and variety; but outside of their own limits Dante sums up all Italy to the distant looker-on, and Cervantes is the one great representative of Spain. In the former case, the perennial power of the Tuscan poet, serious as his own awful subject, intense and impassioned as becomes a traveller who, losing his way on earth, found it again by that vast round through hell and heaven, is very comprehensible. He stands like a mountain in the beautiful country he loved, like Soracte, white and lonely, with a hundred glooms in its recesses, but the light of heaven upon its steadfast head. We can scarcely forget him or get out of sight of him from one seaboard to the other, and the awe of his presence is over the whole land. But the Spaniard is of a different kind. He is not so much a dominating genius in his country as an impersonation of the country itself, the nature and humours and

temperament, the wisdom and the follies, the genial homely wit and the high-flown sentiment of it, at every point a revelation. He has no call to pass through heaven or hell. The earth, the mother country, the quiet rural ways, the little inns and villages, the country company that are to be met with at rustic fair and wedding, are enough for him; and the two strange figures whom he has set up against that tranquil background for all the world to see, have not lost a whit of their freshness and originality, though it is wearing on to the third century since we have had them, and since readers everywhere have laughed, yet sometimes almost wept, at the misadventures of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Shakespeare has a far more splendid breadth and grasp, but it is in the nature of Shakespeare that Cervantes was made. The reader may think it strange, as we do, that a country so grave, so romantic, so worn by revolution, and which a recent philosopher has characterised as the home of superstition, and fitted by its awe-inspiring scenery and frequent convulsions of nature to produce a gloomy and ghostly race, should be thus represented in the world of literature by a man of genius whose most solemn utterances have always a sound of laughter in them, and whose lamp of revelation shows us a people so easy, so genial, so ready to be diverted, and with such a fund of homely shrewdness and cynical rustic wisdom to direct it. It is a strange commentary upon many of the opinions formed and expressed about Spain (which has dropped into a *terra incognita* even to the tourist for a long time back, a country little explored and still less understood), that this genial oracle should be the chief exponent of her life. There is perhaps no foreign writer so widely,

if imperfectly, known. 'Don Quixote,' abridged and mutilated, has been turned into the commonest of chap-books, and has been read by children along with 'Gulliver' and 'Robinson Crusoe' for generations past. It is at this time perhaps more frequently quoted, its personages more commonly referred to, than those of any other foreign work. The good knight-errant is a personage to us as much as to his countrymen,—a type, and, at the same time, a familiar acquaintance. There is no Englishman of any education at all who does not use the adjective Quixotic as readily as he uses any ordinary English word descriptive of a certain character or quality. But while this is the case, the majority of those whom the knight of La Mancha has supplied with a new word or cluster of words, and who have a vague traditionary knowledge of him from their childhood, have but dipped into his great epic, and know nothing whatever about his author—that brave, laborious, restless, penniless, struggling, noble, and lowly Castilian gentleman, whose own life is a far sadder epic than that of Don Quixote, and who has almost as good a right in his own person as in his chief creation to be called the last of the knights-errant. In as far as our space permits we will try to give the reader some simple idea of the man and his work, disclaiming, as always, any intention to settle minute and abstruse points in the history of either, or to compile a work for the use of the few but devoted students who have already a whole library of learned commentaries and investigations upon Cervantes in their hands.

'Don Quixote' has been translated and re-translated into all the modern languages. The first English trans-

lation was that by Shelton, published in the beginning of the seventeenth century. It will scarcely interest the reader to know that a little literature has arisen about this book, and that the question whether Shelton was aided by another hand, or whether that other hand has the entire credit of rendering the second part, has been hotly discussed. These are questions for the learned, and not for us. Two other well-known translations are those by Motteux and Jarvis; the former is enriched with notes by Lockhart. A new translation by Mr Duffield, as to which great expectations are entertained, and which we regret not to have had access to, is, we believe, in the press. The extracts given in the following volume will be almost entirely taken from Shelton's translation. Since this volume was printed, we are informed that recent investigations have thrown considerable doubt on the authorship of the "Tia Fingida;" and at least one excellent authority believes himself able to prove that this equivocal tale is not the production of Cervantes.

CERVANTES.

CHAPTER I.

HIS EARLY LIFE.

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES DE SAAVEDRA was born of an ancient and illustrious family, then run to seed, and dwindling away in poverty-stricken offshoots, in the year 1547, in the old town of Alcalá de Henares, situated within a short distance of Madrid, and at that time the seat of an important university. His baptism is recorded in the parish register of Santa Maria as having taken place on the 9th October of that year. Curiously enough, the question as to Cervantes's birthplace is complicated by the fact that two other Miguels de Cervantes, one of them bearing also the surname of Saavedra, appear in the baptismal registers of the period, though a few years later; one born at Alcazar de San Juan, in La Mancha—the other at Consuegra. In both places a marginal note "in distinct letters" is inscribed upon the record: "This was the author of 'Don Quixote,'" says one; "The author of the Quixotes," says

the other. Both, however, seem to have been quite obscure persons, and never reappear in history; and there is no doubt that the real Cervántes was he of Alcalá de Henares. His biographers generally give great weight and importance to the nobility of the family; and it is very evident that the Saavedras had been a distinguished race, and that the Cervantes, howsoever attached to the larger tree, were still of that class of which it is said in the proverb that they are as good gentlemen as the king, if not so rich. Rich, probably, they had never been; but in the time of Rodrigo de Cervantes, the father of Miguel, they were very poor. All that we know of them shows a depth of poverty indeed which it is difficult to reconcile with the pretensions of the race—pretensions, however, which probably are much exaggerated by passing through the hands of many anxious commentators and historians. According to all probability, Cervantes's condition in life was very much like that in which was born and bred the gentle knight, the deluded yet noble gentleman, Señor Quixada, afterwards Don Quixote de la Mancha, with his old lance and shield hung up in his hall, his common *olla*, his evening salad, his broken meats on Saturdays. Of his youth we have few details. His various biographers do not seem able to make up their minds whether he had the advantage of a university education or not. It was close at his hand, but there is no evidence that he took advantage of it. Probably he was idle, with more love of the old romances in the old book-shelves than of "Aristotle and his philosophie;" and perhaps his father was too poor to afford him the means of study. It is asserted by some that his name is to be found in the lists of students at the University

of Salamanca, and even that he studied philosophy there for two years; and with some appearance of truth it is inferred, from the fact that a learned professor in Madrid, Juan Lopez de Hoyos, speaks of him as "my dear and much-loved pupil," that part of his education was acquired in that city. M. Emile Chasles, one of his latest and most careful biographers, sweeps away all these assertions with a negative apparently not much better founded, presenting a sketch instead of the proud and poor and narrow life in which letters or sciences were disdained, and nobility of birth and a certain independence of spirit made all the new devices of learning unnecessary. "Here," he says, "is the home of the Spanish hidalgo, surrounded by a few fields. The life is wretched, but it is free of all servile work. The family are clad in homespun, but there is always a greyhound and a horse, such as they are. . . . In such a house, the education of a child was to make him a gentleman; instruction was of much less importance." This system of education is not confined to Alcalá de Henares. Cervantes himself seems to justify the supposition by the intimations he gives, not of instruction, but of that insatiate youthful appetite for reading which flourishes most, we are disposed to think, where regular systems of education are wanting. "From my tenderest years I loved the gentle art of poetry," he says; and he describes himself, in his pretended discovery of the manuscript of 'Don Quixote,' as having the habit of reading "even the torn bits of printed paper in the streets."

Almost the only incident of his early days which is preserved to us is the account he himself gives, in the

preface to his Comedies, of Lope de Rueda and his strolling company of players, whose performances he had seen in his youth. Whether this was at Alcalá itself, or in Madrid, or in Segovia, as some assert, it must have been before Cervantes had attained his twentieth year. And he tells the story, when an old man, with so much animation and freshness, that it is evident the incident had made a great impression upon him. He describes the simple and primitive accessories, which were all that were thought of, the making up of the humble stage, the artless contrivance, "an old mantle suspended on a cord," to separate the *vestuario* and form a background, with a glow of pleasurable recollection which seems to call before us, as we may imagine it did before Cervantes, the very scene—where so likely as in the Plaza of his native town?—where the boy may have looked on breathless at all the preparations for this delightful mystery about to be represented before him. "Though I was then only a boy," he says, "and unable to judge of the beauty of the poetry, some lines have lingered in my memory which prove now to my mature judgment that my first enthusiasm was just; and if this were a fit moment, I could convince you also by quoting them." Lope de Rueda, the author of the lines thus affectionately remembered, had been an artisan of Seville, a worker in gold. It was he who, according to Cervantes, "delivered Comedy out of her swaddling-bands," and opened the brilliant chapter of the Spanish drama. He was then wandering about the country, as Molière a century later wandered over France, composing his comedies as he went, and taking part in the representation of them. Out of Spain, we suppose, few people now know much

about this artisan-poet; but to have had his verses laid up for half a century in the memory of Cervantes is worth many a lesser crown.

This is all we know about the young Saavedra till his twentieth year, and it is not much. At that age he appears in an authentic manner in a curious production —an account of the death and funeral of the unfortunate Queen Isabella, composed by Juan Lopez de Hoyos, who then held a chair in the University of Madrid. In this were published, or referred to, a variety of compositions in Latin and in Castilian verse, by divers hands, and among them several by Cervantes, "my dear and much-loved pupil." But whether this description refers to some previous connection, or if young Miguel was attempting to make up then for the deficiencies of his previous education, it is impossible to say. The dismal tragedy in which King Philip's unfortunate young wife and passionate half-mad son were swept from the face of the earth, thus just touched with its shadow the young and bright existence of the great romancer. And it is a curious example of the dulness of contemporary vision to see the placid professor making up his little book, and the careless young poet writing his pretty verses in artless acceptance of the outside of these events, which were of such gloomy and terrible meaning to those who knew more about them. They had, however, a distinct effect, little as he understood or had to do with the history of that stern and ill-fated royal family, upon the life of Cervantes. The Pope had sent a special representative, Monsignor Aquaviva, upon the occasion of the death of Don Carlos, apparently so just a cause of royal grief—to offer his condolences

to the king, as well as to arrange certain ecclesiastical affairs. But these condolences were too complete an irony and reproach to be received with much grace by Philip; and the Papal envoy, a man of "much virtue and letters," made shift to console himself for the neglect with which he was treated by seeking the society of such "courtiers of genius" as could be found in the tragic misery and confusion of the moment, whom he honoured, we are told, by entertaining them at his table, carrying them about with him in his carriage, and discussing with them many questions of politics, science, and literature. What circumstance it was that attracted his attention to the pupil of Professor Juan Lopez, or whether that sage himself was one of the lettered and ingenious persons whom the elegant churchman called to his aid, we are not informed; but when he left Madrid, Cervantes accompanied him as "camarero"—in this case a gentleman of the chamber, bearing the same relation to Aquaviva which Aquaviva himself bore to the Pope. The Monsignor was a young man, not much older than the young poet whom he took into his service; and no doubt it was a splendid beginning for the son of so poor a gentleman as Rodrigo Cervantes of Alcalá. They travelled to Rome in great state and ease,—a delightful journey, by Valencia and Catalonia, across Spain and Italy. Catalonia is one of the places which figures at length in Cervantes's afterworks, but this was the only occasion on which, it is said, he could have made much acquaintance with it; so that he was already beginning, without knowing, his preparations for those labours, not to be actually entered upon for long years, which have made all the earlier

details of his life interesting to us. This journey through the most beautiful and memorable of European scenery, before any blight as yet had fallen upon Spain, and her age of gold was still existing, if beginning to wane, must have been a delightful preface to the youth's active existence. It must have appeared to all who were interested in him the beginning of a prosperous career.

But Cervantes was not the kind of man to be found in kings', much less in priests', palaces. It was in 1568 that he left Madrid, and we lose sight of him altogether for three or four years; during which time, whether he remained with Monsignor, afterwards Cardinal (which dignity came to him when he was twenty-four) Aquaviva, or wandered further, we cannot tell. But in 1570 a great crisis arrived in the affairs of Southern Europe. The Turk, who was to that age far more alarming and dangerous than the wildest imagination could figure the Russian now, was rampant in the Mediterranean, certainly the monarch of those seas, and their scourge—stopping all traffic, threatening all peaceable travellers with a fate in comparison of which death was easy and desirable. The last feat of the great pirate had been the capture of Cyprus, that historical island, now once more returning to its place as a pawn in the imperial game. The loss of it drove Christendom to such a height of alarm and determination, that a league was formed against the conquering infidel. "There came news," says Cervantes himself in his story of the 'Captive,' "of the league concluded by Pope Pius V. of happy memory in conjunction with Spain against the common enemy, who at that time had taken the island of

Cyprus from the Venetians, which was an unfortunate and lamentable loss to Christendom. It was also certain that the general of this most holy league was the most serene Don John of Austria, natural brother to our good King Philip. The great fame of the preparations for this war excited in me a vehement desire of being present at the engagement which was expected to follow." This engagement was the great battle of Lepanto, in which the allies, Spain, Venice, and the Papal States, obtained what was at the moment supposed to be a decisive victory. Upon this great day Cervantes reappears from the mists in striking individuality. He had joined a company of Spanish troops, commanded by Diego de Urbina, apparently some time before, and was with his comrades in the galley Marquesa when the expedition set out. On the morning of the battle he was ill of fever—*calentura*—in the crowded quarters below decks; but when he heard overhead the stir and excitement of the preparations for the fight, no inducement could keep him below. His friends in vain entreated him to remain in safety, ill as he was. But Cervantes would hear no reason. How could he do his duty, he cried, and what would be said of him, if he took their counsel? "I would rather die fighting for God and the king," he exclaimed, "than think of my own safety, and keep under cover." In consequence of this passionate appeal the captain placed him with twelve others in what was considered the post of honour—a skiff by the side of the galley—and here he fought with desperation, and must have perished, according to the report of eyewitnesses, but that the heat of battle veered by-and-by to the other side, leaving the poet-

soldier, however, desperately wounded, with two gunshot wounds in his breast, and one in his left hand, which deprived him of the use of it for the rest of his life. Cervantes gives his own account of the victory with all the force of excitement and poetic passion in a letter written from his captivity a few years later to Mateo Vasquez,[1] the secretary of the king. When the trumpets sounded for the triumph of the Christian fleet and army, he says—

"I held my sword in one hand: from the other flowed waves of blood. My bosom was struck with a deep wound, my left hand broken and crushed; but such was the sovereign joy that filled my soul that I was unconscious of my wounds. Yet was I fainting with mortal pain."

For a time it seemed, not to the victors only, but to all Christendom, that this battle was a decisive one. It seems as such to have turned the head of the Christian world. "That day, which was so happy to all Christendom, because the world was then disabused of the error that the Turk was invincible by sea." No less than fifteen thousand Christians, Cervantes adds, the unhappy rowers of the Turkish galleys, were at once delivered, and the pride of the infidel broken. For his own part, Lepanto was during his whole life his pride and boast. "I too, though humble, had my part in the victory," he says, years afterwards. "Had we lived in the Roman days, I might have hoped for a naval crown." And he boasts of his wounded hand with a

1 This letter, it is believed, never reached Philip's eyes at all. A curious story of chicanery, prolonged to our own days, is told of it. It was sold to the British Museum with a quantity of other papers—bought in order to secure it—but was found not to be among them.

triumph in loss which justifies the brag, that he "lost the use and movement of the left, for the glory of the right."

Thus gloriously was the struggle against the Mohammedan power begun: but the end of the campaign was not so happy. The league soon fell to pieces, as leagues generally do, and Don John was harassed and restrained and interrupted in his career of victory. There were still, however, other successes to follow in which Cervantes had his share. After Lepanto he spent some six months in hospital at Messina—miserably enough, no doubt—getting healed of his wounds: but was yet not half cured, when he set sail again under the same victorious leader for the African shores. "My great wound bled still, and so did the two others—but I would not be absent from the rout of the Moors," he says. The victorious army took Tunis and La Goleta, and carried terror wherever they went. Cervantes speaks with proud contempt of the trembling of the barbarian enemy. "I have seen that strange people humble itself, so much it feared final destruction," he says. Long afterwards he insisted upon the real weakness, amid all their apparent strength, of the Moors in Algiers. But Don John and his followers were recalled when the work was but half done; and soon the poet, gnashing his teeth with grief and rage, has to record the miserable conclusion of this great undertaking. Tunis and La Goleta were retaken by the Turks in 1574, and the brave garrison, overpowered by numbers, perished at their post. "Would to God that I had remained to help them, or perish with them!" cries Cervantes, out of the depths of a misfortune far more

bitter than death. So much as remained of the army of Lepanto lay, wild with rage and eagerness, in the Italian ports, when the news of the regathering of the Turkish army came: and Don John at last breaking his bonds, when he heard of the siege of Tunis, flung himself on shipboard with the intention of rushing to the rescue of the endangered garrison, but twice was driven back to the Sicilian shores by storms. By that time it was too late, and of all that the world had rejoiced over in the victory of Lepanto, nothing but the glory was left. Cervantes was wise enough afterwards to see wherein the weakness of the enterprise had lain, and to judge with grieved but unquestionable disapproval the plans even of his beloved general. But he never ceased to glory in that triumphant day when the sound of victory made him forget his wounds. Happily it does not impair the fame of a victory that the object of it fails.

Cervantes's military career must have lasted between five and six years, from the twenty-second to the twenty-eighth of his life. Only a small part of this, however, was spent in the actual campaign; and if in the midst of war and assault he could interpolate into his narrative an expression of his pleasure in seeing "the ancient and glorious realm where Dido was betrayed by love," it is not to be supposed that he was indifferent to the great Italian cities, when in the course of his wanderings he visited them. His biographers suppose that he took advantage of the enforced leisure, for example, of his hospital life to study the best authors of Italy; but whether this was the case or not, it is certain that he filled his eager soul with many a picture, which returned to him long afterwards, in the far less exciting but more bitter struggles

of a laborious life. Now, however, a still gloomier and stranger experience was to be his. When all was over in the struggle with the Turks, and Don John setting out for Flanders, the young Saavedra turned his thoughts homeward. He had distinguished himself in the royal service, and had been maimed for life; and it is evident that he considered himself, and was considered by the generals, to have a claim for recompense. Don John and the Duke of Sesa, his lieutenant-general, furnished him with letters of recommendation to the king,—the former asking, it is said, for definite promotion, a captaincy for so excellent a soldier—and both strongly pleading his cause with Philip. Furnished with these passports to comfort and distinction, as no doubt he believed, Cervantes set sail from Naples in September 1575, after an absence of seven years from Spain, in a Spanish galley called the Sol, accompanied by his brother Rodrigo, who had been with him, to all appearance, throughout his period of military service. He had "the most favourable prospects and well-founded hopes," and his wounded hand was an ornament which identified and distinguished him like the star of an Order. Various other gentlemen who had distinguished themselves in the war were on board the Sol,—among others a certain Carillo de Quesada, once governor of La Goleta, and unconscious godfather of the Quixote of the future. No doubt they set sail with grateful anticipations of home and rest after all their privations and combats. But in mid-sea the hapless galley encountered a Moorish squadron; and after an unequal struggle, in which Cervantes—who was, no doubt, desperate at sight of the horrible fate before him—fought with the utmost valour, was taken by the pirates.

Such a catastrophe is almost inconceivable in our days. A shipload of weary veterans coming home after an exhausting war, to be thus suddenly arrested upon their way and carried off to the most galling slavery, is an accident so terrible, and so unlike anything that could happen now, that it is with the greatest difficulty the mind can realise it. But it was by no means unheard of, or even unusual, then. The mild and gentlemanly Turk of our present acquaintance is a very different person from the sanguinary pirate who robbed and ravaged these unhappy coasts, sweeping over the seas in galleys manned by scores of unfortunate Christians, thus made the instruments of evil to their own brethren. What the sensations of these poor wretches must have been, when, each man chained to his oar, they had to row their Turkish masters against a defenceless ship, and aid in the consignment of another and another band of their countrymen and fellow-Christians to the same cruel slavery, it would be vain to inquire. It was the hope of making an end of this terrible danger to which every traveller who crossed the Mediterranean was subject, which made the triumph of Lepanto so joyful an event to all Christendom. That the very victors of Lepanto should so soon have proved how entirely in vain their blood had been shed, is one of those strange ironies which continually recur in the government of the world. The story of Cervantes's captivity is so striking and full of incident, that it forms one of the most interesting chapters in his life. Our space will not permit us to set it before the reader so fully as we could wish, but a somewhat detailed account of it is necessary to the understanding of his career.

CHAPTER II.

HIS CAPTIVITY.

THERE is scarcely anything in modern history so extraordinary as the existence of the pirate princedom of Algiers in the days of Cervantes. It continued long after his time to terrify and ravage the Mediterranean coasts; but at no time have we so full a knowledge of it, or were its power and terrors so great. A State which lived by robbery, and that of the worst and most cruel description, a stealer of souls, a merchant in human flesh and blood,—it was a perpetual danger to every traveller whose duty or business led him across that mid-world sea. There were no journeys of pleasure in those days, and it may well be supposed that the risk of finding himself in the hands of the barbarous corsairs was enough to deter every man who could help himself, from venturing upon the waters which were swept by their galleys. Though the state had been founded by the Moors on their expulsion from Spain, it was in the hands of Turkish rulers, tributary to Constantinople, and almost as scornful of their native fellow-religionists as of the Christians—living upon exactions and plunder, a nest of robbers, with few redeeming virtues save those of cour-

age and nautical skill. To make the barbarity still more cruel, many of the leaders of this fierce community were renegades, Greeks and Italians, the scum of the earth,—since a man of ability and commanding character must have been lost indeed before he would place himself in this degraded and degrading position. A man might turn Turk in the present day, or Mohammedan, which means the same thing, and be no more than a nine days' wonder, smiled and marvelled at rather than denounced and given up by his contemporaries. But no such tolerant indifference existed in the sixteenth century, when men believed with fervour, whether they were Christians or Mohammedans. The Algerian renegades were fiercer and more bitter with their Christian captives than any native Turk,—bitter, no doubt, with the irritating sense of having stepped downward in the scale of civilisation, and of being despised by the poorest slave that trembled at their frowns. With such men, uneasily dominant, and a population altogether, or almost altogether, dependent upon the robbery of the seas, the Algiers of that period presents the most singular spectacle to the readers of to-day. That a people in many respects so degraded should have so daunted the spirit of a whole population of captives as to have kept them effectually under, and never run the risk even of such a scene as that of the Sicilian Vespers, is almost too wonderful to be believed. It shows the moral effect of the fear with which those tortures of slavery were universally regarded, and which made the sight of a corsair at sea so appalling to the victims, whose very soul was quenched within them at the contemplation of the misery to which they were doomed. The imagination of the captives never seems

to have recovered that shock; otherwise, notwithstanding the ferocious cruelty of their masters, and the precautions taken, it is impossible to understand how it was that no outbreak ever occurred.

The strange community which thus lived upon the spoils of all the European nations, and the forced labours of slaves drawn from races more civilised and more vigorous than their own, rises before us in the strangest crowded panoramic scenes in those simple narratives and legal statements, which convey to us the story of Cervantes's captivity. The masters arbitrary and irresponsible, against whose cruelty there was no appeal —yet not so cruel when their flowing Asiatic robes enfolded the figure of a native-born servant of the Prophet, as when it was a Greek or rude Italian bully who thus disguised his shame: the crowd of miserable captives whose hard fate it was to row the galleys or serve the houses of their enemies, whom they hated as tyrants and despised as infidels; the still harder fate of the more distinguished among them, kept apart from the others in hope of ransom, sometimes flattered, sometimes insulted, loaded with chains at one time, allowed to herd together in despairing idleness, to talk over their hopes of ransom, and write their miserable appeals to friends at home for money, which, perhaps, they knew could not be obtained, or had a hundred chances of never reaching them; while scattered among them were a degraded rabble of unfortunate compunctious renegades, — poor wretches whom the fear of torture and death had led to abjure their faith, but who had either sunk into hopeless degradation after this last sacrifice, or were pitifully fluttering about their late Christian brethren, in hopes of

somehow getting back. To add to their misery there arrived now and then, with shouts of furious joy from the native population, another and another captive ship with new victims, thrilling the captive crowds with sympathetic excitement; and once a-year, with still more keen pangs of anxiety, they heard of the Redemptorist fathers, with ransom-money for some, with perhaps a chance for others, to whose deliverance the contributions of the pitiful at home might be applied should there be special circumstances in their case to warrant it. Was it not with a primary reference to these unhappy sufferers that the prayer, which is still said by English worshippers, "for all prisoners and captives" was framed? They had need of the prayers of all Christians. At the same time, amid catalogues of cruelties which chill the blood, it is strange to see the freedom with which these captives moved about and met each other, and talked, and even worshipped, apparently without hindrance or very strict surveillance; and how, though we are told every art was employed to make proselytes, they were still, with rare toleration, allowed to have their churches, served by captive priests, where masses were said and sacraments administered as regularly and peacefully to all appearance as at home. These were the redeeming features in the dreary yet animated and crowded scene.

The chief authorities to whom we owe our knowledge of this extraordinary community, and of the state of affairs in Algiers, are, after Cervantes himself, two priests,—Don Diego Haedo, Archbishop of Palermo, and his nephew, bearing the same name, who was a Benedictine monk. Neither of them, so far as appears, was ever in Algiers, and we are not told what was the special in-

ducement of the archbishop to undertake, or of his nephew to complete, so elaborate a work as the 'Historia y Topografia de Argel.' Most probably the book owes its origin to another priest, Dr Antonio de Sosa, who was a captive in Algiers for several years,—a friend of Cervantes, acquainted with all the secret plottings of the Christians, and the cruelties inflicted upon them;—a man who apparently never lost his own self-possession in the midst of prolonged and bitter sufferings, and whose personal testimony is of the utmost importance. Dr Sosa, on his rescue, which took place a year after that of Cervantes, came to Sicily, and no doubt suggested to Archbishop Haedo the work which has kept his name green. Another authority, equally unimpeachable, is the official record of the evidence of a number of witnesses called by Cervantes before he left Algiers to bear their testimony as to his personal behaviour. That the reader may gain as clear a knowledge as possible of the outside of the strange life which this evidence puts before us, we may quote M. Chasles's picturesque and graphic sketch of its scenery and surroundings. It is at an exciting moment—the arrival of a prize in the harbour.

"The landing was accomplished according to a rule which never varied. In the first place, all the oars were taken out and carried to the storehouse, and not a single Turk was allowed to leave the ship until it was thus stripped bare, like a bird without wings; for the captives were there eager for liberty;—a moment of forgetfulness would have left them time to seize the oars and escape. Having taken these precautions, the goods, the slaves, all the booty, was landed, to the great joy of the merchants and of the king. The captives were examined, searched from head to foot, and arranged in classes. Those who were rich or noble were carefully sep-

arated from the poor and humble. The first represented money; they would pay a good ransom. The others represented labour and manual force. The latter unfortunates were cruelly treated, and set to work at once. The nobles were kept apart. This Algerian scale of rank involved a miserable comedy; the possessor of the captive, in order to augment his price, took proceedings of the most able kind. While the slave protested his poverty and humbled himself to diminish the amount of his ransom, the master affected to treat his victim with the greatest respect;—he fed him as nearly well as possible, pointing out that he was ruining himself by this generosity, and would expect to get it all back; while the prisoner, on the other hand, protested that he could never obtain the sum asked,—that he was not rich, but a mere soldier. The Turk gave to his slave the most rapid advancement: he promoted a private to a generalship; a sailor he made an admiral, a curate an archbishop. 'I, who am but a poor priest,' said Dr Sosa, 'they made me a bishop by their own authority *et plenitudine potestatis*. Later I was assumed to be the confidential secretary of the Pope. They assured me that I was daily for eight hours closeted with his Holiness in a room, where we discussed in secret the most important business of Christendom. After that they made me a cardinal, then governor of Castelnuovo at Naples, and now I am transformed into the confessor of the Queen of Spain.' Dr Sosa defended himself in vain from these honours—witnesses were found, both Christians and Turks, who swore to have seen him executing the functions of governor or of cardinal."

The same rule by which Dr Sosa was raised so many degrees in the hierarchy affected Cervantes also. The letters of Don John and of the Duke of Sesa, which were found on his person, gave his captors sufficient warrant for the idea that he was a gentleman of importance, and one for whom a high ransom might be obtained. He was placed, accordingly, among the number of the

privileged, from whom, apparently, labour was not expected. And it is evident that the character of the prisoner carried out all the suppositions formed of him, and justified the pirates in the idea that it was no common prize which had fallen into their hands. Never was a more restless or troublesome captive. He seems scarcely to have reached Algiers when—impatient, one might suppose, of enriching these cruel tyrants with such sacred money as might be drawn by hard compulsion from the poor little desolate house at Alcalá, bereaved of both its sons—he attempted, with a few others, to escape along the sun-scorched coast to Oran, where there was still a Spanish settlement. The attempt was dangerous in every way, giving but a small chance of liberty with a hundred chances of a cruel death. But death was better than bondage, and even to faint and perish by the wayside upon the scorching sands a happier prospect than to rot useless and hopeless, without even the consolation of labour, under the yoke of the infidel. The little party of fugitives, however, had made but one day's journey, when the Moor who had undertaken to be their guide forsook them, and they had no resource but to return: which they seem to have done with an ease which confuses our ideas of the bitterness of the bondage, although, on the other hand, the witnesses already referred to give evidence that Cervantes was "laden with chains and irons" at the time of this attempted flight, and afterwards, on his return, "much maltreated" by his master. After this early attempt there is a blank, and it is not till about eighteen months later that we find the energetic Spaniard again in action.

In the meantime, the first of the band to be ransomed, one of those who had accompanied Cervantes in that first attempt at flight, had gone away to Spain, carrying with him letters to the parents at Alcalá. It is easy to imagine what heavy news this was to the poor, proud gentlefolks in their old house. It was not, indeed, such an extraordinary and unparalleled catastrophe as such a thing would be now; but Rodrigo de Cervantes was poor, and had no means of raising the large sum needed for the redemption of both his sons. The family did all they could; the little fortunes of the daughters, and every ducat that could be scraped together, was collected, and sent off with all the speed and precaution possible. "All the property of their parents and the dowries of their unmarried sisters, who made themselves poor for the rescue of their brothers," Cervantes himself says in his memorial to the king. But all this did not suffice. Dali Mami, the Greek whose slave Cervantes was, refused the modest ransom with scorn. It would seem to have been to Miguel, though the younger brother, that the money was sent, and who took in all things the chief place. When he found it hopeless to buy the deliverance of both with the sum that had thus been wrung out of the very life-blood of his family, Cervantes secured with it the deliverance of his brother Rodrigo,—whether out of personal magnanimity and self-sacrifice, or because the less importance of Rodrigo made a ransom possible for him which would not have been granted to his brother, it is unnecessary to inquire; but Miguel Cervantes must have known when he gave this sum for the deliverance of Rodrigo that he was closing all doors of probable freedom upon himself. He made the best of

a painful sacrifice, and engaged his brother, as soon as he arrived on the Spanish coast, to procure the despatch of an armed vessel for the deliverance of as many captives as could escape to it. Two important persons among the captives—Don Antonio de Toledo and Don Francisco de Valencia, both Knights of S. John—lent their aid to this project by giving Rodrigo letters of recommendation to the governors of their respective provinces, and imploring help for him in this enterprise: but it was Cervantes who was the leader in all.

In preparation for the arrival of this ship, he fell upon an extraordinary plan. It appears probable, indeed, that this expedient did not, in the first place, refer to Rodrigo's ship, but was resorted to with a view to any chance of escape that might occur. A certain captive, called Juan, of Navarre, a poor gardener in the service of Hassan, the viceroy of Algiers, was won over to be the instrument of this scheme, as he was afterwards its victim. Juan, in the depths of a garden belonging to his master, made a cave or grotto, probably enlarging and clearing out some natural fissure in the sandy soil, to which a band of fugitives, fourteen in number, stole one by one. They were all men of note, and most of them Spanish nobles: and there they remained for seven months and a half, from February to September of the year 1577. Rodrigo left Algiers only in August, so that there must have been some other possibility or hope, one would suppose, to have made so long a period of concealment possible. The garden was near the sea, "approximate to the place where the ship would cruise." "It is hard to understand how Cervantes, without being missed from the house of

his master, could govern this subterranean republic, watching over its safety, and the subsistence of all," says Navarrete: a difficulty which every reader will appreciate. Indeed, were the story not so fully established by independent testimony, it would read like a fabulous legend. But the witnesses who tell the tale in their legal examination according to all the rules of Spanish law, cannot be doubted.

After all these elaborate preparations, on the 28th of September the much-wished-for vessel arrived upon the Algerian coasts, and, when night had come, drew near the shore to which the garden, with its cave and all the anxious hearts within, was approximate. But as the galley loomed through the dark with its muffled oars, some wandering Moor upon the beach, or solitary fisherman in his boat, caught sight of the noiseless invader, and gave the alarm. The rescuing crew seem to have thought of no alternative but flight. They disappeared as silently as they had come, floating away like a shadow before the shout of alarm which their discoverers had set up. Cervantes bitterly accuses them of cowardice. "The hearts of the sailors failed them, so that no one had the courage to jump on shore, and inform the refugees of their proximity." Thus their hope of safety vanished into the darkness of the night, and the miserable little band, in their damp and wretched confinement, were left, after all that protracted waiting, as far from help as ever. Even this comparative safety, however, did not last much longer. The man who had undertaken to supply them with food, a personage called El Dorador, had been meditating the transfer of his valuable soul from the faith of Christ to that of Mohammed—at all times a

welcome act to both rulers and people; and he found the moment auspicious and the opportunity excellent of taking, as it were, a gift with him in the shape of a betrayal. Accordingly, one night soon after the failure of the ship, when they were seated sadly in the narrow subterranean refuge, discussing, no doubt, with sick hearts the prospect of the ship's return, the secluded garden in which Juan had harboured his countrymen suddenly filled with the sinister light of torches and the footsteps and voices of *men*. Cervantes had but time for a word before the Moors were upon them. In the haste of that terrible moment, he called upon his companions with a curious, almost contemptuous magnanimity, which it is difficult to understand, to allow him to bear the blame alone, "promising," says the ninth article of the plea which so many of his captive countrymen supported by their testimony, "to accuse himself in the hope of saving all the rest." Having said this within the shelter of the cave to his terror-stricken companions, he turned to meet the Moors as they rushed in to seize the fugitives, and called out to them in a loud voice. "Not one of the Christians here is guilty in this matter: I alone am the author of it, and it is I who have brought them here," he cried, facing the fierce band. We cannot help feeling that something at once of the lofty craze of generosity which made his Quixote mad, and of the keen satiric yet indulgent consciousness of the absence of all nobility of spirit even among the *caballeros* round him, which produced that mad Quixote, prompted this proud speech with its almost arrogant self-sacrifice. Still more strange it seems that he should have been taken at his word by both friends and foes. So far as appears, not one of the

fourteen was brave enough to place himself by the side of the leader who thus claimed all the guilt and punishment as his own; nor did the guards and alguazils oppose or throw any doubt upon his sole responsibility. The fugitives were all carried to the house of Hassan, the viceroy, but Cervantes alone was brought before him for examination. The end of this incident is perhaps the most remarkable of all. Cervantes was examined by Hassan again and again, and, "with terrible threats of death and torture," urged to confess who were his accomplices; but, standing fast in proud self-devotion, he was able not only to baffle his judges, but, strangest of all, escaped with his life, and with no greater penalty than an additional chain, and the transfer, either in love or hate, of his ownership from Dali Mami to Hassan. Perhaps the greatness of his character impressed the pirate viceroy in spite of himself; or perhaps, as some writers suggest, he felt that such a man was worth such a ransom as seldom reached the corsairs' hands. In any case, the transfer was made; and no further harm came of the incident, except to poor Juan the gardener, who was hanged a day or two after the discovery.

This humble victim was the only sufferer. It is said that Hassan's object was to inculpate the friar, Jorge Olivar, one of the Brothers of Mercy, and official Redemptor for the province of Aragon, who had lately arrived in the fulfilment of his office with money enough of private ransoms and public charities to make him a prize worth having, should any attempt at conspiracy of this kind be proved against him. Dr Sosa in his testimony declares that Father Jorge, in terror of his life, privately sent to him, in the place where he was

imprisoned, his sacred vessels and vestments, lest they should fall into the hands of the Turks; but the firmness of Cervantes warded off the danger. Why these Redemptors with their money should not have been as fair game as the captives whom they came to redeem, is a curious question. In the whole matter, there is a confusion of lawless crime and obedience to a code which is bewildering. Thus the community, the recognised occupation of which was piracy, was visited by merchants from all quarters of the world, and dealt with them according to the ordinary code of honest dealing, so far as appears—though had these same merchants been encountered at sea, they would have become, themselves and their goods, the natural booty of the turbaned ruffians who permitted them to ply their trade in peace when they had voluntarily effected a landing; and the same potentate who appropriated with the easiest conscience shiploads of men and all that belonged to them, sought in vain for a pretext to seize the priest, who was the emissary of a king at war with him, and the bearer of money which he coveted, but dared not otherwise secure. It would, however, no doubt, have put an end to the fine trade in Spanish nobles which Hassan and his brother pirates drove, if the Redemptors had not been safe to come and go, so that self-interest carried the day even over cupidity —one of its greatest triumphs; and in order to live by dishonesty, the Algerians were forced in some matters to be honest. In all things, however, the African colony is a confusion and perplexity How the captives could be so securely held, and yet be so free—how they managed to hold such constant communication with each other,

and arrange their plans, and even get funds for carrying them out—is very astonishing. But, perhaps, of all these astonishing things, the most remarkable is how that one chivalrous Spaniard, holding his head high, proudly refusing all help but that of his ready and prompt and wealthy soul, full of a thousand resources, and gay in his consciousness of strength, should have confronted his cruel master, and overawed or touched him to sympathy. Whatever might be the power which he acquired over Hassan, some power there unquestionably was, which, not at this time only, but on other occasions, carried him through the most elaborate conspiracies and the fierce fire of interrogatory and examination scot-free. Hassan, it must be added, was, like Dali Mami, a renegade.

We have been led astray, however, by the other and more complicated narratives of this tragic life, from the account given by Cervantes himself of the conditions of his existence, which throw some light upon its junction of bondage and punishment with a kind of freedom. The story of the Captive given in 'Don Quixote' is not his own story—indeed, is scrupulously separated, from the beginning, from his own experiences; but we can be under no misconception in accepting the following as a description of his daily life, even without the direct reference to him with which it concludes. We quote from the old version of Shelton, which has a simplicity and force more like the original than the smoother style of more recent translations.

"The king's captives of ransome doe not go forth to labour with the other poor crew, if it be not when the paying of their ransome is deferred; for then, to the end that they make them write for money more earnestlie, they make

them labour and go to fetch wood with the rest, which is no small toyle and trouble. I then was one of those of ransome; for as soon as it was known how I was a captain, notwithstanding that I told them of my little possibility and want of means, all would not prevail to dissuade them from consorting me with the multitude of gentlemen, and those of ransome: they put on me a chain rather to be a token that I was there for my ransome than to keep me the better with it, and so I passed away my time there with many other gentlemen and men of mark held and kept in there for their ransome. And although both hunger and nakedness did vex us now and then, or rather evermore, yet nothing did afflict us so much, as to hear and see every moment the cruelties that my master used towards Christians. Every day he hanged up one; he set this man on a stake and would cut off the other's ears, and that for so little occasion, or wholly without it, as the very Turks themselves perceived that he did it not for any other cause but because he had a will to do it, and that it was his natural inclination to be a homicide of all humankind. Only one Spanish soldier, called Saavedra, was in his good grace, who, although he did sundrie things that will remain in the memorie of that nation for many yeeres, and all to the end to get his libertie, yet he never struck him or commanded him to be stricken, or said so much as an evill word unto him; and yet we all feared that he should be broached on a stake for the least of many things which he did, and himself did also dread it more than once; and if it were not that time denieth me leisure to do it, I would recount to you many things done by this soldier which might both entertain and astonish you more than the relation of my life."

The royal Bagnio in which this curious existence went on was, Navarrete informs us, "an oblong seventy feet in length by forty in breadth, with many chambers and apartments built round it; in the midst a cistern of pure water, and at one side in the lower part was the church

or oratory where Mass was said the whole year through by captive priests, singing the divine offices, administering the sacraments, and sometimes preaching sermons. On great solemnities the crowd was so great that Mass was said in the *pátio* (the court). This the Turkish and Moorish guards took advantage of, exacting a contribution from every one who came in, and thus getting a great deal of profit." In these enclosures, when the hearts of the captives were at their saddest, the leaders, or perhaps, it is most likely, "a certain Saavedra" alone,—he who had seen Lope de Rueda put up his booth in the market-place, and kept his verses in his heart,—set on foot dramatic representations of various kinds—private theatricals, so to speak—to amuse a little the heart-broken crowd, and make them forget their troubles. "A colloquy in verse, by Lope de Rueda," was given one Christmas eve, with music and a concert of instruments. Thus, while a hundred devices were surging in his breast by which to overthrow this band of robbers, the great Spanish romancer constrained himself to provide amusement for his desolate countrymen, not being able, notwithstanding all his exertions, to get them anything better. Few things could be more touching than this performance,—this brave, if forlorn, laughter in the face of sorrow. It is, in its way, a *Sursum corda* more genuine, perhaps, in its frivolity than a more serious service. Infinite pity for the multitude who had not even the pitiful and heart-aching hope of ransom, and who knew themselves, in all human probability, slaves for life, is in the effort—a pity which inflamed the soul and made the heart burn. Oh for but four hundred Spanish gentlemen, sword in hand, without

those chains! Oh for one hour of Don John; for another such fierce brunt of glorious battle as that which lamed this young soldier at Lepanto! But, alas! the captive might eat his heart as he pleased. Don John was dead, and Philip had his own little conquests in hand, and thought nothing of their anguish. All that Cervantes could do was to form plan after plan, to stir up his companions to plot with him their own deliverance, and, meantime, to keep up their hearts if he could. "If I might but find myself in the king's presence," he cries, in words which must have risen to his lips then, though they did not see the light till years after:—

"Oh if fate or grace would aid me so,
To find me 'fore great Philip on my knees,
My timorous lips, nigh dumb with awe, to have
Within the royal presence hope of speech,
Would say: High Lord, thy gracious potency
Draws barbarous nations subject to thy feet.
For thee the dark-hued Indian with his gifts,
Acknowledging an honest vassalage,
Draws gold out of the darksome caves of earth.
Rouse, then, the courage in thy royal heart
Against the impudent and shameless rage
With which a pigmy outrages thy might.
His hosts are many, but his force is small,—
Naked, ill-armed, with neither rock nor fort,
Nor walls for their defence. If but the sails
Of thy Armada on the horizon rose,
No thought save how to save their lives were theirs.
You hold within your royal hands the key
Of that hard prison in which Christian souls,
Full fifteen thousand, languish, pine, and die,—
All of them holding out strained hands like me,
Knees bent to earth, beseeching to be freed

From the inhuman wrongs that hem them round.
O mighty king, thine eyes of pity turn
To those that flow with tears; since strife and din
Of discord, which has harassed and oppressed
Thy soul, thou leavest behind, and peace has come.
Grant then, O king, that the great enterprise
Thy noble father in his strength began,
May be by thee accomplished. The mere sight
Of thy great going would such panic spread
Through all these barbarous races, that I dare,
Here standing, prophesy their loss and ruin!

. . . . . .

Ah me! my words but demonstrate the poor
Rude soul of me, thus daring to discourse,
So lowly, in the presence of such greatness.
But the great cause will justify my speech,
And put to silence all who dare suppose
My boldness will offend thee.

I am called
Back to my work again,—to work and die."

This address is put into the mouth of Saavedra in the 'Trato de Argel,' the first of the dramas in which Cervantes, returning to his own burning recollections, attempted to move the hearts of the king and people after his return to Spain. Almost the same words he had already written, but in vain, to Philip's secretary; and it is impossible to doubt that the cry was bursting from him through many a longing day, when he could do nothing but plan perpetual failures to escape, and watch with despairing fury the pangs of the unfortunates who surrounded him, or with a smile of pity more heart-rending than his tears, gather from such old broadsheets as had survived among the miserable belongings of the captives, a bit of his favourite dramatist to amuse the unhappy.

One more attempt, however, of an elaborate description, was yet to be made. The fruitless longing for some great action on the part of Spain, the burning desire for some attack from without, which might make it possible to rouse the oppressed within, and sweep the barbarians off the face of the earth, which filled the minds of the captives, never seems to have had any encouragement of fact or possibility—although there was a time when the rumour went that Philip was preparing his ships for some unknown destination, and the pirate community itself was so greatly agitated by the news, that it is not difficult to imagine what must have been the inward commotion among the Christians, suddenly intoxicated by this apparently well-founded hope of deliverance. But, alas! all that Philip meant was to disguise his intended attack upon Portugal, and the deliverance of his despairing subjects in Algiers was far from his thoughts. In this moment of terror, however, when no one knew at what moment the sails of the Spanish galleys might be the first object visible to the awaking tyrants, the captives, though forced to labour at the reconstruction of the walls of Algiers, were regarded with anxious eyes, and many private efforts made to conciliate and win their favour. But when it became apparent that no assault was intended, their sufferings were doubled. Perhaps it was the impatience of disappointment after hopes so highly raised which made Cervantes plunge into another enterprise. Among the renegades was a certain Abd-el-Rhaman, who had been once the Licentiate Giron, a native of Granada,—one of those who had yielded to Islam in a moment of weakness, but now longed for the country which he had closed against him, and the faith he had outwardly abandoned. Cervantes,

who had friends in all classes, finding sympathy everywhere, had no doubt divined the uneasy penitence of this unfortunate apostate. There was much in the condition of the renegades and the paradox of their existence which must have roused the keen intellectual curiosity of a man so full of insight and comprehension. Even among the highest order of these renegades there were men whose transformation had yet left behind some point of understanding, some inalienable sympathy, which made the restless Spanish captive, so full of plans and of thoughts, a privileged being for them, and attracted him on the other hand to sound and fathom the mystery of their backsliding. He talked to the former Licentiate, the trained scholar — once, no doubt, proud of his university and his nationality — of Spain, and all they had left behind them, till the heart of this unfortunate masquerader in the borrowed plumes of another race melted within him, and he too became ready to do all and dare all for the gallant *caballero* who had fought at Lepanto, and whose head was full of the redemption of his race. The scheme this time went so far that the renegade bought, and, still more wonderful, two merchants provided the money to pay for, a galley "of twelve benches," which lay by the quays, and in which Cervantes hoped to save, with himself, sixty of his fellow-captives. The traitor this time was no greedy Moor or treacherous renegade, but a Christian friar, Juan Blanco de Paz, a Dominican, who had been himself a captive for several years in Algiers, and who, hating perhaps with the instinct of a lower nature, the brave and generous soldier who had acquired so much reputation among the captives — or perhaps jealous to

find so great a scheme going on and he himself left out — told one of Hassan's servants of the plot, who informed his master. For a breathless interval it would seem Hassan took no notice, leaving the plot to mature, that he might lay his hand on all at once, —a tactic which was baffled by the discovery on the part of the Christians that they had been betrayed. When the whisper reached the merchants, they were so deeply alarmed for the consequences of the discovery that they sought out Cervantes with an offer to pay his ransom if he would leave Algiers with the first ship that sailed. Once more, however, Cervantes repeated his former assurance. He would not fly. He would take upon himself the entire guilt, would betray no one, compromise no one, deliver all the parties involved, so that not even suspicion should touch them. Once more there seems a certain superb braggadocio in his position—a half-contempt, yet perfect charity, which is wonderfully characteristic. One can imagine that he rejoiced in the situation, with all its tremendous risks. To stand before the tyrant whom everybody feared, himself tranquil, with a smile of supreme self-possession and self-control, all his wits perfectly about him, and such a certainty of his own constancy and strength to resist both threats and violence, and torture, and death itself if need were, as few men could have ventured to assert —was a thoroughly congenial office. Here was a man to whom it was a delight to stand for others, to be their saviour, to answer for them, to take the full weight upon his own shoulders. Perhaps we identify Cervantes all the better in his human individuality that there is little in his brave and light-hearted confidence, his dis-

dainful magnanimity, and the almost glee with which he assumes the post of universal defender, which recalls any more solemn self-sacrifice. He does it out of pure nobility and daring of nature, with positive pleasure in the risk he runs. A touch of gratification also in his power over Hassan, whatever it was, and determination to try that influence to the utmost, mingles in his inspiration, and adds to his daring. Even in such a tremendous emergency it was a pleasure to him to feel his power.

This time, however, the matter was very serious. To subdue his spirit all the more, his hands were tied and a rope put round his neck previous to his examination, as if to hang him by at the end of the inquiry,—a practical threat which Cervantes smiled at with his usual calm, answering to all questions that he alone in Algiers was the author of the renewed attempt at flight, having concocted it with four other *caballeros*, now all ransomed and gone; and that if there had been any intention of taking other captives with them, these captives were not to be informed of it till the last moment. The vice-king, without being able to emancipate himself from the evident influence gained over him by this bold and bright-eyed Spaniard, was angry enough to take more severe measures against him than had yet been attempted —putting him in "the Moorish prison" in his own palace, where he was kept in chains for five months, at which time the three years of Hassan's government were accomplished. His intention was to carry his slave with him to Constantinople, where it would have been impossible to find or deliver him more. One is glad to hear that the false Moor and weak-minded Christian, the lost

Licentiate Giron, had no worse fate than that of being banished to Fez. As for Cervantes in his new confinement, he had the proud satisfaction of having saved all the other parties to his plot. The strange thing is that he was always permitted to do so, and that no other generous soul, touched by his example, ever stood up by his side and claimed a share. He knew the character of the people for whom he was so willing to stand substitute.

Good, however, came out of this evil. In the meantime, the poor people at home had been making efforts which, in their poverty, were gigantic, for their captive son. In the year 1578, apparently after the return of his eldest son alone, Rodrigo de Cervantes of Alcalá appeared before the Alcalde at Madrid to appeal for royal aid, and, with a series of pathetic statements characteristically Cervantesque, made affidavit of the services and wounds of his Miguel, and of his own poverty, supported by the evidence of four witnesses who proved the facts of his case. What it must have been to the soul of the proud Castilian gentleman, publicly to avow himself "very poor, — *que no tiene bienes ningunos*, that he had no property whatever," — may be divined, with a pang of sympathy, by many a reader; but at all events, Rodrigo could hold his head high in the consciousness of his son's worth and true nobleness. This, it is supposed, must have been one of the last acts of the father's life, for soon after it is Donna Leonora who appears supplicating the help of the Court for her son's deliverance, and supported by a certificate from the Duke de Sesa as to the services of Cervantes. A curious grant was made to the mother—illustrating still

more remarkably the confused state of affairs in which peaceful trading and barter were carried on, side by side with what one would have supposed the unpardonable offence as between one nation and another of organised and acknowledged piracy—a grant of all the profit to be derived from a shipload of Spanish goods shipped from the province of Valencia to Algiers, and estimated at the value of two thousand ducats. From this the family, always unfortunate, derived only seventy ducats, no care apparently having been taken either in the despatch or sale of the goods; but nothing could be more extraordinary than this state action in a matter of trade, and peaceful sending forth of the cargo of Spanish goods to the markets of the barbarous state, which held some fifteen or twenty thousand Spaniards in ignominious captivity. With the aid of these seventy ducats, Donna Leonora made up two hundred and fifty ducats for her son, to which her eldest daughter Andrea, then a young wife and mother, added—very probably, by all we know of her after-life, from the receipts of her own work—another fifty. This these poor women confided to the hands of Father Juan Gil, one of the Redemptorists, who arrived in Algiers after the last offence of Cervantes, and while the town was still full of his attempt, and of his trial and defence and threatened removal to Constantinople, — a place where, according to all appearance, those who entered left hope behind. No doubt Father Juan, who had known and had much intercourse with him on his previous visits, and who was now charged with a special message for him, lost no time in asking after Cervantes; and we should form too low an idea of the Spaniards in captivity, however broken and bowed down their souls

might be, if we could suppose that there was not much stir and many a tale about the brave fellow who had saved so many of them from all the pains and penalties of the discovered plot. He was a remarkable figure enough, with his lame hand, his brilliant eyes and smiling dauntless countenance, to have been missed almost at every step the new-comers took: and Father Juan liked the man, and most probably had been touched by the anxious devotion of the mother and sister, and their unwearied exertions. Almost needless to add that the sum they had given him was quite inadequate to the ransom. Hassan had too great an idea of the man who had given him so much trouble, and made so much impression on his mind, to let him go so cheaply. Five hundred ducats was the lowest price he would hear of, and Father Juan had but three hundred: and any delay would make his ransom impossible. In these circumstances the good friar exerted himself nobly. He made a collection among the merchants in the port, and supplied what was wanting out of the general alms of which he had charge, binding himself to repay in Spain any portion of this of which an account might be demanded from him; and thus scraping together enough to satisfy the rapacity of the viceroy, liberated Cervantes, some say out of the very galley into which he had been led in chains for the voyage to Constantinople,—at all events, on the very day of Hassan's departure, not an hour too early. One can almost imagine that after so many bold attempts to procure his own deliverance, and after all his great plans of a Spanish invasion and rising of the captives to throw off their yoke, there must have been a kind of painful feeling to Cervantes in the joy of his

liberation. He had been five years and a half in these chains when his deliverance came.

No sooner was he free, than the indomitable Spaniard, feeling, no doubt, that now again the ball was at his foot, and a glorious destiny before him, and that heaven and earth demanded that this Saavedra should go back to his native shore to conquer the world, without a cloud or breath of slander upon his name, took the most characteristic action. He erected Father Juan into a tribunal of justice, and brought before him a crowd of witnesses to prove what kind of life he, Cervantes, had lived during these five lingering years. He would have no peradventures about himself, and leave no whispering slanderer, like Blanco, behind, perhaps to put a slur upon his good fame, when his contemporaries were dispersed, and the true story had fallen out of mind. Here is his half-authoritative summons to the priest to take upon him this state and dignity:—

"Miguel de Cervantes, native of the town of Alcalá de Henares in Castile, at present in Algiers, ransomed, and about to depart, declares: That, being at present on his way to Spain, he desires, and it is important for him to have, an examination of witnesses, as to his captivity, and also as to his life and habits, to be presented, if necessary, to the council of the king, from whom he hopes for advancement. And since in Algiers there is no Christian official to administer justice among Christians, and that your Reverence, bearing the office of Redemptor of Captives by order and commission of his Majesty, is thus the representative of his person, and also in the same sense of that of his Holiness the Sovereign Pontiff, since the Monks Redemptors of the order of the Holy Trinity are often considered as apostolical legates,—for these reasons, in order that the said examination may have force and authority, he supplicates your Reverence

to interpose in it by authorising Pedro de Rivero, writer and apostolical notary, who, by commission from his Majesty, has held that office for many years in Algiers among the Christians, to receive the evidence which the said Miguel de Cervantes shall bring before him."

The long statement which follows, drawn out in twenty-five articles, gives a full account of the proceedings of Cervantes during his stay at Algiers, his attempts at escape, his determined assumption of the guilt on all occasions, and refusal to compromise the others involved, his constant efforts to aid and support his fellow-captives, his purity and honesty of life, and high estimation by all worthy men: and is proved by twelve witnesses, among them the venerable Sosa, whose detailed evidence is the most valuable of all. The other witnesses add of their own knowledge various particulars concerning the kindness and universal charity of Cervantes, which are sometimes touchingly natural. One of them declares himself to have found "father and mother in the noble *caballero* of whom he had been told before he reached Algiers, and who succoured him from the moment of his arrival;" while all unite in affirming his charity to the poor, his endeavours to save children from abjuring the faith (a danger which, as will be seen from his after-productions, affected him greatly), and in leading back those who had fallen away from the faith of Christ. The whole is summed up by Fray Juan himself, who specially certifies the honour and high qualities of Dr Sosa and the other witnesses, all of whom he declares to be among the "principal and best qualified Christians in Algiers, persons of honour and truth," and adds his own testimony to the character of Cervantes, as a man whom

he has known familiarly, much honoured and esteemed by his countrymen. This curious mass of evidence was presented to the king ten years later, when Cervantes applied for an office in the royal service, and was then laid up in the archives of the Indies in Seville, where it was found only in the beginning of the present century. It has supplied innumerable writers with all the facts that can now be known of this portion of the life of Cervantes, but did him no special good, so far as can be seen, except in this way. The curious little trial of himself before the impromptu judge and the Christian population in bonds, is as strange a semi-judicial proceeding as ever was recorded; and it is eminently characteristic of the man.

Thus he left Algiers, having fully accomplished five years of captivity. "I was a soldier for many years," he says, "and more than five a captive, from which I have learned to be patient in adversity." He set sail, according to all evidence, about the end of the year 1580—just three hundred years ago. It was not till some time after, that, in his plays "El Trato de Argel" and "Los Baños de Argel," and in the story of the Captive in 'Don Quixote,' and other tales, he recorded his own recollections of this memorable part of his life; but it may be well to separate these productions from their chronological place, and show the reader with what energy and feeling the old scenes came back, and his old hopes and schemes put themselves into words. He did not move King Philip, as he hoped, to put a stop to the infamous traffic in his own subjects and countrymen, or to sweep out that nest of cruelty and oppression; but at least he brought that strange existence, with all

its perils, before the eyes of many who had a personal interest in the matter through captives of their own, and perhaps increased the sums which the good Redemptorists carried yearly to the Algerian tyrants for the relief and ransom of their countrymen. These, and the "patience in adversity" of which he speaks, were all he had for his five painful years of captivity. No man has ever needed patience more: he had abundant use for that precious quality during all the course of his long and laborious career.

CHAPTER III.

THE LIFE OF ALGIERS.

THAT Cervantes should have returned to Spain full of the most vehement and eager desire to make an end, as far as a poor soldier could, of the horrible system from which he had himself so cruelly suffered, and which might at any moment interrupt in a like manner the existence of his neighbours and fellow-countrymen, is too natural to require any explanation. But what chance had a poor soldier, penniless and forgotten, with a monarch to whom even the glories of Lepanto had been little agreeable, and who was more warmly bent on exterminating heresy than on attacking Islamism? How it was that Cervantes found out his own possession of a power which, if it does not move kings, can yet solace the burning bosom which is fired with great wrong and sympathy, and may light up an unconsidered subject, and bring it home to the mind of a people, we cannot tell. He had been a writer of verses all his life; and he seems to have been known to such literary persons as were dimly flourishing in Madrid, making comedies and compiling pastorals. Perhaps he had hoped on his return to have a hearing at first hand,—to present him-

self "before great Philip on his knees," and pour out his plea with all the fervour of a living voice and a personal sufferer. But, so far as that hope went, he must have been very speedily undeceived. Not many years elapsed, however, before he found voice in the strange and stern composition which he called "El Trato de Argel"—The "Commerce" or "Traffic" in Algiers, to translate it literally. To call this a comedy, according to the modern acceptation of the word, is a bitter piece of irony. It is a comedy of the order of that "Divine Comedy" which Dante made of the life in hell. The Moorish town, with its population of slaves and tyrants and betrayers, its blaze of scorching heat and arid landscape, its atmosphere of gloom, is a kind of hell upon earth to the captive. The play opens with a long soliloquy, of which we quote the beginning:—

"Oh, sad and miserable lot!
Oh, bitter servitude and sore!
Of which the ill is more and more,—
The good existeth not.
Oh, life of purgatorial woes—
Hell that within this world is placed!
Evil with not a solace graced—
Strait whence no issue shows:
Symbol of how much pain can be
In all the deepest pains combined,—
Suffering, of all great sufferings joined—
The greatest misery.
Necessity beyond belief—
Death beyond doubting—life that is
A life not to be lived, is this—
Both seen and unseen grief:
Touch which the mettle of our minds
Discloses, ringing false or true:

Poor life of labour full and rue,
Where gloomy penance finds
Fit place. No more: my soul will be
Silent: this torment is my foe.
Nor will I suffer words to show
How deep he woundeth me."

This is the utterance of the captive Aurelio, who is, after a sort, the hero of the piece, though scarcely so interesting to the reader as is the appearance in the background of "a certain Saavedra," who appears from time to time to discuss with his friends Alvarez and Sebastian the miserable life which they are leading, and the chances of escape from it. It is Saavedra who gives vent to the outburst of desire which we have quoted in the former chapter, to find himself before King Philip, and to move his royal heart with pity for his miserable subjects and countrymen. The story, such as it is, which runs through the little drama, is of the most artificial and slight character, though it seems to have pleased Cervantes so much that he repeats it more than once—his invention in this matter being, it would seem, limited. A pair of Moors, Isuf and Zara, are the owners of Aurelio and Silvia, two Spanish captives, who were, in their own country, betrothed to each other, and on the point of marriage. Isuf employs Aurelio to plead his cause with Silvia, while Zara, on her side, employs Silvia to woo Aurelio, with the effect of making known to each other, and throwing together, the two separated lovers. This little intrigue, however, is a mere sacrifice to the foolish public, which doubtless, then as now, demanded some *motif* of love and commonplace romance to sweeten the sadder substance of such a tragic episode.

But the real scope and meaning of the piece lie in the scenes which go on in the background, and across which these two love-stricken pairs, and the witch Fatima —who brings spirits from the vasty deep to overcome the honour of Aurelio, but without effect—pass and repass from time to time. The little group of Christians, spectators of all that is going on in the miserable world of the captivity, discuss among themselves a great piece of news which has thrown them into wild excitement. When Saavedra exclaims, "Oh, hard and evil and inexorable star, that has dragged me hither to terrible grief!" his friend Alvarez bids him not to lament. "The generous bosom shows a gay front to adverse fortune," he says, then tells the news he has heard: a vessel of Biserta has arrived during the night, bringing a captive who has certain news that a great enterprise is in hand for their deliverance. The king himself is striving with all his armies and allies. Soldiers are pouring into Spain, princes and *caballeros*, both native and strangers. This news "has given life to my dead hope," says Alvarez. "Break our bonds, O ye heavens, and send us quickly the liberator!" exclaims Saavedra: and then he gives vent to that cry to great Philip. Long before it was written, the captives had bitterly proved that Philip had entertained no such purpose; but who could tell if in this way, at least, the cry of the prisoners might not come to him? No doubt the soldier-writer, inspired by his own wrongs and those of his comrades, anticipated even now the monarch's presence at his play, and the effect of that appeal, when, visibly "before great Philip on his knees," on the homely stage amid a crowd of excited and admir-

ing hearers, these burning words might at last reach their destination.

Scarcely are they uttered, however, in the original scene, when another captive rushes in wildly with very different tidings. "O Spain, beloved country," he exclaims, "look upon our fate!" "What has happened?" cry the others. He then tells them of the dreadful martyrdom of a monk of which he has just been a witness. News had come from Spain that a Moor, or rather a renegade, who had taken captive more than six hundred Christians, and committed piracies innumerable, had been burned by the Inquisition, and in rage and revenge the Moors have seized upon a priest, and murdered him with every kind of torture. The incident is one which really took place, the sufferer being a priest called Michael de Aranda. Some of his biographers have attempted to show that Cervantes had here the intention of protesting against the *autos-da-fé*. But there is no appearance of anything of the kind in what he says. He has taken pains, on the contrary, to prove that the renegade deserved his punishment. "There, justice shows itself in punishing evil; here, cruelty shows itself in doing injustice." The only words which can be supposed to imply a criticism of the action of the Inquisition is the timid wish expressed by Alvarez that they might find "some other way" in Valencia of punishing renegades. "Let them not be condemned in public, but die *by poison*," he suggests—a most curious way of showing superior enlightenment. But Cervantes had no leisure to make protest against the other peculiarities of his times. His whole soul was in his own overpowering complaint; and the description

of the cruelty with which the innocent friar was done to death, confessedly by way of reprisals against his countrymen—not from any, even supposed, sin of his own—was intended to raise to the highest point the rage and indignation of all Spaniards, not to deprecate the cruelties of the Holy Office.

After this impassioned narrative the scene changes, and two merchants appear in discussion of their last voyage. "They say you were nearly caught by the Spanish galleys," says one. "They say so," answers the other, contemptuously, "but it is not true. The Christian galleys have neither feet nor hands. They are weighed down with merchandise; and then their pride comes in. They will not condescend to take an oar; it would be against their honour. We, on our side, without honour, carry off their cargoes." While they gossip, a Christian family is brought into the slave-market, and sold, the father and mother and two boys, each to a separate master. The scene is one of which we have had various modern repetitions, and presents all the conventional features of the most atrocious traffic ever known to man. Nothing could have been better adapted to move the hearts of the audience at home. The two little boys are bought at once, and their new owners wait impatiently the end of the leave-taking between them and their parents. This separation is made still more heart-rending by the miserable mother's consciousness that her children are exposed to the danger of apostasy, and by her entreaties to them to remember their faith and the prayers she has taught them. The childish incapacity of the youngest, Juanico, to understand what has happened to him, intensifies the pathos.

"Señor," he says, "I cannot leave my mother to go with any one else." The mother nerves herself to the separation. "Go, my son, who art a son no longer, save of him who has bought thee," she says. "O mother, have you given me up?" cries the child; and he is led away in a prostration of childish grief. A scene of still more heart-rending effect supplements this, when the poor little slave is brought back some time after in all the finery of a renegade, turned into a Mussulman, the favourite, and possibly the heir, of his master, and full of childish vanity in his new dignity and grandeur. He meets his brother, whom he has already half forgotten, on the way. The little Francisco is of the martyr kind, and the contrast between them is picturesque and dramatic. When Juanico tells him proudly that he has changed his name along with his faith, and is no longer Juan, but Soliman, Francisco declares indignantly that poison would have been better than such a change; but, melting into affection, "Embrace me, brother," he says.

Juan. Brother? When was I your brother? Do not touch me, dog.

Francisco. O my brother, you change my joy in seeing you into misery!

Juan. That is great folly. Was there ever anything more pleasant than to be a Moor? Look at this beautiful dress which my master has given me. I have another much finer, all made of brocade. I have honey sweetmeats to eat, and sugared sherbet to drink, and carden, which is delicious; and you can't think how nice the pilaffs are. If you would like to be a Moor, take my advice and do it before you are older. But I must leave you, for it is a sin to talk much to Christians.

And the poor little renegade marches off the scene with ludicrous sham dignity, while the Christian captives, looking on, burst forth into cries of grief and indignation. "How well are alms employed in ransoming children!" they cry:

"Oh that to-day, by charity unloosed,
Might Christian hearts be found, unstraitened, large
In gifts, to free from prison and from chains
The Christian captive; but yet more than all,
The little ones of weak resolve and will."

This is one of the most heart-rending risks of the captivity; but there are many others, which the dramatist, with his whole heart in the story he is telling, sets before his audience with all the fervour of personal experience. In another scene we are led into the dreary desert between Algiers and Oran, through which Cervantes himself endeavoured ineffectually to escape, and where scores of unfortunate fugitives continually lost their lives. It is Alvarez, however, in the play, and not Saavedra, who attempts this mode of flight; and the scene opens upon us when he has lost his way and lies exhausted, looking for nothing but death. "So long a road," he cries, "so many crags and mountains to pass, and the continual fear of wild beasts, so overwhelm me that death must be the end of it. My food is exhausted, my clothes torn in the bushes, my shoes worn out, my spirit gone. I can scarce lift one foot beyond the other, hunger wrings cries from me, insufferable thirst torments me, my powers have failed me, and my sole hope is the dishonour of giving myself up to whosoever will enslave me again." Alvarez, however, is saved by a miracle. He calls upon the Virgin in his despair, and she sends a lion—un-

likely protector, but less cruel than man—to deliver him. Another captive who has attempted this same mode of escape is taken by the Moors and brought before the king,—the same Hassan with whom Cervantes himself had so much to do,—who orders him to receive six hundred blows on his shoulders and fifty more upon his feet. Hassan then bursts forth into an apostrophe to the nation which gives him so much trouble—an address in which the author not only satisfies his own pride of race, but uses his utmost power to flatter the people, to whose sympathy he is making this desperate and impassioned appeal. "I know not," cries the Turk—

> ——" of what this race is made,—these dogs
> Of Spaniards. Who are all the fugitives?
> Spaniards: and they who never change their trim?
> Spaniards: and they whom nothing can o'erawe?
> Spaniards: and all the troublers of our rest?
> Spaniards: within their bosoms heaven has placed
> A soul indomitable, swift, and true,
> Yet steadfast like the rocks in good or ill."

"One virtue they possess," he adds—"they keep their word;" and the piece ends with the liberation of the two lovers on their promise to send money for their ransom,—a brilliant example of Hassan's belief in Spanish honour and good faith.

Who could doubt that to be thus appealed to at every point, by their pity, their pride; by the sight of suffering men and corrupted children, the captive fainting in his flight, the priest at the stake; by the slave-market and its disgraces and pangs of horrible separation; by that delicate flattery of the enemy's abuse, more sweet than praise; by the sight of a whole community holding

up anxious hands, straining eager eyes towards them,—must have deeply affected the Spaniards, and that, if not Philip, at least the nation, must have been moved to the deepest sympathy? So, no doubt, Cervantes felt, as, swift and impassioned, without thought of art or the unities, or anything but his sufferings first, and those whose sufferings were not yet past,—the twenty thousand Spaniards lingering in Moorish prisons,—he dashed upon paper, and upon the primitive Spanish stage accustomed to few entertainments more grave than those light interludes in which all theatrical misadventures and troubles ended in a dance, the twinkle of airy feet, and sweep of the castanets—those pictures of despair. But alas! who could doubt, on the other hand, that the crowd which loved its dances and the light melodies that swayed them better than tragic despairs and sorrows, would look with blank faces at the gloomy panorama, turn its back upon the life in Algiers, or drop its maravedis in the friar's box for the release-money, satisfying its conscience, and returning to its ordinary pastimes with relief? Here was neither beginning nor end, neither romance nor marriage. Even the love was of a graver sort than could interest the commonplace and gaping crowd.

We have not noted, though it was a point upon which Cervantes had a simple pride, the introduction of the abstract qualities of Necessity and Opportunity upon the stage, where they appear to tempt Aurelio to evil in a scene which is not without some poetical power. "I was the first," says Cervantes, "to represent the imaginations and hidden thoughts of the soul, bringing moral impersonations into the theatre, to the general applause of the audience." Whatever the audience of the six-

teenth century may have thought, we doubt whether the present reader would be impressed by the two solemn interlocutors who, with a certain artless skill, are represented as suggesting each an argument in favour of the sin to which he is tempted, which the subject of the temptation confusedly repeats and adopts, until suddenly coming to himself on the very threshold of evil intent, he cries out, "Aurelio, whither goest thou? Hence, vain thoughts! begone from me, all ill-born fancies! I am a Christian, and like a Christian must I live," with an outburst of lofty truth which sweeps all the sophistries away.

Whether it was that the "Trato de Argel" proved too serious, and with too little admixture of the lighter elements, to move the public—or that Cervantes, out of zeal for a subject he had so much at heart, could not be content without making another effort to rouse and interest the Spanish world in a matter so important to it; or whether his mind was so full of the experiences and pangs of his life of captivity, that no other theme came readily to him,—it would be impossible now to tell: but it was not long before a second play, entitled the "Baños de Argel," followed the first; in which, with a large increase of romantic interest, the addition of another pair of lovers, and a happy termination to their trials, Cervantes once more placed before his countrymen the life of miserable animation, agitation, alarm, and pain, which so many unhappy captives of their blood were living only a few days' voyage from their shores. The story opens with a raid of the corsairs, one of their bolder piracies, in which they are represented as swooping down by night upon a peaceful Spanish village, be-

trayed to them by the incredible baseness of a renegade, Yzuf, who is a native of the place, and knows how to approach it unseen. No alarm has been given; the watchmen are asleep; no warning beacon has been lighted on the watch-tower; and the terrified population is surprised, and a large number of them carried off before the defenders can be roused. Among them is a beautiful young lady, Costanza, who is the betrothed of Don Fernando. The Christian bowmen and their captain come down from the hills, only to find the village in flames and desolation. "Where shall I find my Costanza?" cries Don Fernando in despair, calling aloud to the "pinnacles of clear crystal, the walls of burnished silver" — those walls and towers which have been no defence against the pirate—and invoking the morning light, that he may at least see the sea over which she is being carried. As day breaks, the despairing lover climbs the cliff to wave forth signals to the departing galleys, and offer ransom; but as they disappear from his eyes, and all his signals are disregarded, he ends by throwing himself into the sea in his despair, from whence, however, he is rescued by the pirates, and carried off into captivity in the same ship with Costanza. With them are a crowd of villagers full of terror and agitation, an old man with two children, a sacristan, who is the buffoon of the piece—no doubt a sacrifice on the part of Cervantes to the lower likings of his audience—and many more. The arrival of the vessels at Algiers is described in a lively scene. A gun is heard from the sea, announcing their approach, and immediately the town is filled with excitement. Azan Baxá and his suite, and all the idle crowd, stream down to the

quay to see the arrival, and inspect the captives. The captain and his renegade guide ask leave to kiss the feet of the king, who, however, embraces them instead for their courage and success. "We have sacked my village," says the vaunting renegade, boasting of his own treachery; "and though it is small, we have got some profit out of it, and some captives."—"Let us see some of the best," cries the king. "How many are there?"—"A hundred and twenty," replies the renegade.

Baxá. Are there some good strong fellows for the oars? are there any artisans?

Yzuf. I trust there are some that will please you.

Cadi. Are there any children?

Yzuf. Two,—no more; but of great beauty, as you will shortly see.

Cadi. Certainly Spain produces lovely children.

Yzuf. You will admire these ones. By the way, so far as I can make out, they are my own nephews.

Cadi. You have done a good office for them. . . . Who is this one?

Caurali. I don't know what he is.

Captive. I, Señors, am a carpenter.

Hazèn (a repentant renegade, apart). O foolish Christian, no money will buy thee now! He who is a skilled workman may never hope, so long as life lasts, to be freed from their hands.

This scene ends tragically. After the captives have been led away, Hazèn, the repentant, reproaches Yzuf, the braggart traitor, with his crimes. "Thou hast lifted thy sword against thy country, and the offshoots of thine own blood thou hast rooted up," he cries, and ends by proclaiming himself still a Christian, and stabbing the villain, for which act he is sentenced to be impaled, and

is led away rejoicing. "Christians, you see me die no Moor, but a Christian!" he cries: "tell what you have seen to my parents in Spain, if ever you escape from this bondage."

While this exciting scene has been going on, the ordinary life of the captives is exhibited in the first hours of the morning in the Bagnio itself.

(*Enter the Keeper, accompanied by a Captive, with paper and ink.*)

Keeper. To work, Christians, to work! let no one stay behind, be he sick or well, priest or cavalier; to work all of you! Ah, vile rabble! must I call you a second time? . . . These go off for the wood, according to the list; those to the sea. Keep good count of them all. Thirty are told off to the barge, sixty to the walls, twenty to the bakery, and ten are sent for to the house of Caurali. Despatch, for the day is advancing.

Second Keeper. The Cadi has sent for forty. . . . There is enough work for every one, if there were two thousand of them. Where do these cavaliers go?

Keeper. Let them bide this morning; they are the most important we have.

Second Keeper. Then they pay?

Keeper. That is evident. Who rests must pay.

(*Enter* DON LOPE *and* VIVANCO, *captives, with chains on their feet.*)

Lope. No small good fortune is it to have escaped to-day from the work prepared for us.

Vivanco. When I do not work I am but the more weary and cast down; this close confinement is torment to me. It relieves the burden on my soul and heart to see the fields and the sun.

Lope. To me the torment is greater when I see them; for

the sad thoughts of being a slave, which keep my soul in prison, make solitude better than cheerful company.

(*Enter a Christian captive flying before the Keeper, who follows, striking him with a stick.*)

Keeper. Ah, jester, this is how you hide yourself! Useless dog, do you think I keep you for my pleasure?

Christian. For God's sake, Effendi! I am ill.

Keeper. I will soon cure you with this stick.

Christian. For two days I have had continual fever, which makes me light-headed.

Keeper. And that is why you hid yourself? Go on, dog! (*Exit, striking him with the stick.*)

Vivan. This poor fellow finds little advantage in his sickness: a captive may be at death's door, but no one will believe him. . . . Death is the only certain witness. He who will not believe in a living man, must believe in a dead one.

Thus musing sadly in their chains, the two gentlemen pass to and fro in the open court, where other adventures happen to them. Another Christian captive passes through with a bloody cloth wrapped about his head, having had his ears cut off by Zarahoja, the brutal master who accompanies him, and who answers his complaint with, "I promised you to do it, infamous dog, if you fled again." "If you should do still worse," cries the captive,—"double my chains, cut me to pieces,—yet so much do I long for freedom that I will fly again. By land or on the wind, by water or by fire,—howsoever I may attain freedom, by that will I attempt it." "Zarahoja," asks the keeper, "is not this a Spaniard?" "Is it not clear," answers the master, "when you see his spirit?" Thus everywhere the Spanish captives bleed and groan, yet the chivalrous Spanish soul is

recognised, and, even in the midst of cruelty, honoured. But when they are again alone, a still more wonderful adventure happens to the two cavaliers. The open court in which they are—the *pátio* or outer chamber of the Bagnio—is built round, partly with their own melancholy chambers: but on one side at least there are other houses with small and closely curtained windows, according to the Moorish custom. From one of these there suddenly waves forth unsteadily a long wand or reed with something tied to the end of it.

After a momentary alarm they approach, and it becomes apparent that it is to Don Lope that this secret communication is addressed. It is raised when his comrade approaches, but lowered to him, and he detaches the little packet tied to it, in which is some money and a letter. The astonished cavaliers do not know what to think. "Eleven gold scudi," says Don Lope, "and a doubloon, which is the paternoster of the rosary." "A very proper comparison," cries Vivanco, saluting ceremoniously the veiled window,—an acknowledgment which the other has forgotten to make, so astounded is he by the event. "What manna from heaven is this?" he asks: but when they read the letter enclosed, the wonder grows. It is from Zara, a Moorish maiden, the daughter of a rich and noble Moor, of whom every one speaks well, as they find out after inquiry, and betrothed to another Moor, Muley Mahomet, a well-known personage. The lady's letter, however, is of an exciting tenor. In it she informs the captives that she has been taught "all Christianity" by a Christian slave who was her nurse—"that is to say, the four prayers, and to read and write." "This Christian told me that Lela

Marien, whom you call Santa Maria, loved me, and that a Christian would take me from this country." Many captives she had seen in the Bagnio, but none that pleased her till now; and she entreats Don Lope to tell her his name and whence he comes, and if he is married, or if he will have her for his wife. She is beautiful, she tells him, and rich, and will give him money to buy his rescue if he will take her with him: but if not it does not matter, "for Lela Marien will take care to find me a husband." The chivalrous Spaniards throw themselves at once at her feet. "All that is good in the land is in Zara," cries Don Lope; and a succession of scenes occur, in which they learn to know each other in this imperfect way. Zara and her lover at last meet, though only in the midst of the group formed by the other story of the piece; the expedient formerly employed in the "Trato de Argel" being again resorted to, to cause such an imbroglio of love-making as might please the multitude; Costanza and Fernando, the pair of lovers who were reft from each other in the first scene, having found each other again in the house of Caurali, the pirate who took them, and having attracted the love of their master and mistress. It must be allowed that in this respect the invention of Cervantes was limited. Zara, the lady who lowers money and love-letters to the chosen captive knight on the end of a reed, is identical with Zoraide in the story of the "Captive" in 'Don Quixote;' and the double loves of the pirate pair and their slaves follow almost exactly the same lines in the previous play, the "Trato," as in this of the "Baños," while they are partially repeated in the novel of the 'Generous Lover.' However, it was no doubt a necessity to

the writer whose meaning was so much more serious, to impress the tragic portion of his tale,—the burden which weighed upon his heart, as his message on that of a prophet, till he had delivered it,—by means of the artificial machinery of lighter scenes, and attractive superficial complications.

The reader in the present day, however, will find the romantic scenes much less interesting than those which show the condition of the captives. Here we have at full length the account of those "private theatricals" to which we have already referred: the entertainment got up in the Bagnio on Christmas for the amusement and solace of the poor captives, in which the Sacristan again appears as the privileged buffoon, but which is sadly broken up by the news that one of the children, whose capture we witnessed in the first scene, is suffering martyrdom for the faith. The children in the "Baños" are more steadfast than was the wretched little Juanico in the "Trato." Here is a scene, no doubt taken from the life, which shows the inclination of the conquering Turks for the captive children. It must be added that the officials of this Algerian state are all represented as Turks or renegades,—the Moors being a milder, and also a more or less oppressed race. Caurali and the Cadi appear together to visit the children, and finding their father with them, turn him away with injurious words. "Dog, what do you here? Have I not told you, villain, to give up all thoughts of seeing your sons?" though when the boys cry to go with him, their masters consider it "delightful childishness." "He is full of grace," says Caurali, even though the little Francisquito is still struggling to follow his father.

Cadi. You see it also? Know that I adore him, and mean to adopt him as soon as he turns to Islam.

Francisquito. Know also that this is a joke: no, not if he gave me mountains of gold, or three whole reals, or even two maravedis.[1]

Caurali. What do you say of their pretty ways?

Cadi. They are supernatural.

Presently the children come again on the stage with a trumpet, which little Francisco blows with delight, and which is one of the seductions employed by his master to make him give up his childish faith. Francisco, however, remains uncorrupted. "I am a Christian and a Spaniard," he says, piping with his baby voice. The elder, Juan, is alarmed, and bids him lay down his trumpet, and go over with him the two prayers to God. "The Ave Maria is enough," says Francisco. "And the Paternoster," pleads Juan. "Yes, that too." "And the Creed." "I know it by heart." "And the Salve?" "Although they gave me two trumpets, I should never be a Moor!" the child cries. Presently enters the Cadi, and with him Zarahoja, the cutter-off of ears:—

Cadi. What are you doing, my boys?

Juan. As you see, Señor: my little brother is blowing his trumpet.

Zarahoja. He is a child, and it suits his age.

Cadi. And what were you doing?

Juan. I am praying.

Cadi. For whom?

Juan. For myself, for I am a sinner.

Cadi. That is all very well. What prayers were you saying?

[1] The maravedi being the smallest coin of all.

Juan. Señor, the ones I know.

Francisco. Answer rightly. The Ave Maria.

(*He blows his trumpet.*)

Cadi. Put down the trumpet before me. . . . This child will drive me wild. What did he say?

Fran. Ave Maria.

Cadi. And answer?

Fran. Gratia plena.

Zara. The elder teaches the younger.

Juan. It is not I that teach him. He has it of his own mind.

Fran. Oh, how good it fits to say here, Our Father in heaven!

Juan. When we have no father on earth, it is well to have recourse to Him in heaven.

Francisco. Then I say all the four prayers, and the last which my mother taught me, which is good when one dies.

Cadi. What do you say in that?

Fran. I believe in God the Father.

Cadi. By Allah, he moves me to his destruction!

Fran. Does that trouble you? What will you do then when you hear me say Salve Regina? For your confusion I know all the four prayers; and I know well that they are shields against your sharp swords, and your wicked inventions.

Zara. With no more than raising a finger and saying Allah Ilallah, you will be safe out of this danger.

Fran. It is not in the prayer-book, therefore I cannot say it.

Cadi. This wears out my patience. Carry them to my house, for they must die.

Fran. (*throwing away the trumpet, and throwing off his Moorish dress*). Away with the trumpet, and this hateful dress that hides my soul!

Zarahoja, softened, though he is a mutilator by profession, at sight of this mingled childishness and stead-

fastness, tries to persuade the enraged Cadi that "presents will make them change their mind more than the whip or the stick," but with no success. "Mahomet himself will be blasphemed if I do not subdue these urchins," cries the Cadi, and poor little Francisquito dies horribly—fixed to a column, "like a portrait of Christ." The directions in the play are, that when a curtain is drawn, the little martyr may be seen "fixed to a pillar in the way which may most move compassion." The scene is too dreadful for modern taste, but Cervantes had a definite end in view; and his little renegade, who pushes his brother away from him and declines to soil himself by talking to Christians, and this other figure of the infant-martyr, tenderly conceived in its mingling of baby levity and Christian faith, if too grown-up and theological at the end, supplement each other in urging his object: Ransom, ransom for all Christians, especially the children, and an end to Turkish tyranny and piracy and cruelty.

Never through all his life does Cervantes move across any stage without an echo in his own ears of that chain that jarred at his feet for five long years: he cannot forget it, nor let his readers forget it. His novels are full of it. Even in the soft and subtle strains of his pastoral there rises a storm upon the sea, and a Moorish sail and the shadow of a prison. When the Two Dogs exchange their experiences in Seville, on the occasion of the immortal Knight-errant taking lodging at a wayside inn, there appears once more a captive, a Moorish master, a tale of misery and wrong. And this is not to say that Cervantes, in his own person, a soldier accepting the hazards of war, a ripe and wise philosopher whom years had taught to look more smilingly than severely upon

mortal weakness, and at all times a magnanimous, indomitable, high-hearted person, giving way to no self-pity, was all this time mourning his own captivity or unable to get beyond it. Very different was his object. Though he was safe, there were thousands of others languishing or labouring their hearts out in that dreadful bondage. He would not lose an opportunity or let a chance go by of warning, entreating, beseeching on his knees with solemn prayers, or afoot in fierce indignation, great Philip or great Spain to save the captives —to about as little purpose as were most of the other undertakings of his laborious life.

We may add to this description of the dramas of captivity the one other serious work produced at about the same period of Cervantes's life, which, though it has nothing to do with his captive state, belongs to the same great and heroic effort to move and inspire his country which seems to have been the first impulse of his genius. Here was the true knight-errant's enterprise, which he afterwards, with tears and laughter, in the impartiality of age, held up to a ridicule which is not all ridicule, but threaded through and through with a lingering earnestness, a gleam of unexpired hope. A tragedy so stern and unrelieved as his "Numantia" has no parallel in modern times. No softening of happy love, no escape from the growing horror, is permitted to the reader. The subject is the heroic resistance of the city of Numantia to Rome—a resistance which lasted fourteen years, and ultimately ended, not in the subjugation but in the self-sacrifice of the inhabitants, not one being found alive in the beleaguered city when at length the Romans found their way into its terrible silent streets.

We quote from Ticknor's 'History of Spanish Literature' the following brief and clear abstract of the plot of the drama, if plot it can be called :—

"Its *dramatis personæ* are no fewer than forty in number; and among them are Spain and the river Duero, a Dead Body, War, Sickness, Famine, and Fame. The action opens with Scipio's arrival. He at once reproaches the Roman army that in so long a time they had not subdued so small a body of Spaniards, and then announces that they must now be subdued by Famine. Spain enters as a fair matron, and, aware of what awaits her devoted city, invokes the Duero in two poetical octaves, which the river answers in person, accompanied by three tributary streams, but gives no hope to Numantia, except that the Goths, the Constable of Bourbon, and the Duke of Alva shall one day avenge its fate on the Romans. This ends the first act.

"The other three divisions are filled with the horrors of the siege endured by the unhappy Numantians; the anticipations of their fate; their sacrifices and prayers to avert it; the unhallowed incantations by which a dead body is raised to predict the future; and the cruel sufferings to old and young, to the loved and lovely, and even to the innocence of childhood, through which the stern fate of the city is accomplished. The whole ends with the voluntary immolation of those who remained alive among the starving inhabitants, and the death of the last survivor, a youth who holds up the keys of the city, and then, in presence of the Roman general, throws himself headlong from one of the towers,—the last self-devoted victim."

It is curious to realise that this gloomy tragedy was among the first-fruits of the genius which has moved all the world to laughter, and worked out its epic through a crowd of ludicrous incidents and the broadest mirth. Yet so it was. "Numantia" belongs to the heroic period of Cervantes's life,—the time in which he hoped

by his single hand to rouse Spain to a great effort, and to recall his country to the sterner virtues, which in every country the visionary believes to have once existed. With this strenuous desire he spared no pains in depicting the sufferings of the captives who appealed to her in the present, and in representing before her the resolute and indomitable struggle of her predecessors in the past. We can scarcely wonder at the exaggerated estimate which some German writers have given of this play, if play it can be called, when we realise the purpose of it, and the powerful unity of its conception. The mother who gives her child her blood instead of milk, but never breathes even a wish to have her sufferings relieved at the cost of surrender; the dying girl who entreats her lover not to risk, in order to seek bread for her, a life which may still strike a last blow for the city; the wives who consent, without a remonstrance, to their own immolation and that of their children, rather than that one of them should fall into the hands of the Romans,—all join in giving a monotonous grandeur to the action. The softer touch which puts the young lover before us, defending himself for his love against the reproaches of his friend, is almost the only relief we find in the gloom. "Why," cried Leoncio, "being such a good soldier, are you so bewitched by love at such a terrible moment?" The dialogue drops into the lighter rhymes with which it is the custom of the Spanish dramatists to relieve their solemn verse. Morandro replies:—

> "With wrath my bosom burns,
> To hear thee speak thus madly.
> Is't love by chance that sadly
> My heart to coward turns?

Have I e'er left my post
To seek my lady's chamber,
Or slept when toil and danger
His rest my captain cost?
Hast thou e'er seen me moved
From that my charge demanded,
By bribe or weakness branded,
Far less from having loved?
If no one at the end
Can fault in me discover,
Why that I am a lover
Blame me thus hardly, friend?"

When, however, Lira, the gentle creature whom Morandro loves, comes upon the scene, languid with hunger, and overwhelmed with sorrow, this youthful argument gives way to the deeper strains of tragedy, though the same rhymes are still retained. "O sweet Lira," he cries, "stay a little! let me see thy beauty; let me enjoy the good which can give me happy life in death? Of what are you thinking, O glory of my thoughts?" "I am thinking," she replies, "my happiness and yours will soon be accomplished, and that before long this war will end my life." In all she says there is the exhaustion of extreme weakness. "Hunger has so drawn out my vital thread that it will soon carry off the palm," she says, with a confusion of metaphors which wounded nobody's feelings in those days. "My brother died of hunger yesterday; by hunger my mother too has ended her life; and if I survive, it is only because my youth has greater strength to resist its power." Morandro, wild with grief, swears that she shall not die of hunger so long as he has life. He will snatch the bread from the very lips of the Romans—"if these hands," he cries,

"are what they used to be." Against this resolution her languid voice remonstrates with all the force it has left:—

> "I in the food you gave me
> Would find but small sustaining—
> More certain loss than gaining
> In wounding thee to save me.
> Enjoy the strength, for pity,
> That thy fresh years are giving:
> Far more imports thy living
> Than mine to our sad city.
> Thou still canst well defend her
> From foes with cunning laden;
> But what can one poor maiden
> With failing forces lend her?
> Morandro, gentle lover,
> Give up this desperate going.
> To live by thy undoing
> Would be to die twice over."

Lira's remonstrance, however, is of no avail. Leoncio, who has overheard the dialogue, calls aloud in admiration—"This terrible offer thou hast made shows clearly, Morandro, that in the breast of a lover is no cowardice. I will go with thee, friend." It is then Morandro's turn to protest against the throwing away of his friend's "green years," but without avail. The description of their furious sally is given by one of the Romans outside. "Two Numantians, full of proud fury," he reports to Scipio, have thrown themselves across the ditch and the wall, and delivered battle to the whole army. Here again the measure changes into a hurried and cumbrous rhyme, which in the original expresses the rush and mad force of the attack with considerable power:—

"For all the force of guards and pickets scattering,
Themselves amid a thousand lances throwing,
And with such maddened rage and fury clattering,
That free throughout the camp was left their going,
They forced their way, Fabricio's standard shattering,
And so their force and desperate valour showing,
That in a moment seven soldiers stout
Were by their blades transpiercèd in and out."

Morandro returns from this mad sally, leaving his friend dead behind him, to die in his turn at Lira's feet, leaving her the bread which has cost his life. "O bread full of blood," she cries, "I do not put thee to my mouth to nourish me, but to kiss the blood that stains thee!"

This heart-rending episode forms the lighter part of the play, which rises gradually to the climax of universal destruction, until the Romans, startled by the stillness of the city, the absence of sentinels on the walls, and cessation of all sound, climb the walls with much caution, and come upon the terrible spectacle of a city of death. The only individual left alive is then found to be Viriato, a boy, who comes out to the top of the tower in which he has hid himself, and from thence addresses the bewildered besiegers. He has fled there in a panic to save himself from the universal death, but now confronted with the "perfidious Romans," the spirit of his people revives in him. "I inherit all the spirit of Numantia," he cries; "judge what folly it is to expect to overcome me." Then, with the keys of the city in his hand, he throws himself down from the tower—the last victim.

This was how Cervantes, in the heyday of his life,

before he had found out how many of his hopes were delusions, expected to rouse his country to the high destiny he had imagined for her. From the lips of the Moors and from the echoes of the past he was bent on persuading Spain that her genius was more noble, her spirit higher, her mind more indomitable, than those of any other nation. His own Quixote could not set out with more blind confidence in the splendour of his mission, or in the great results to be obtained by it, than did the soldier-poet, still fresh from his captivity, and finding freedom to be of all inspirations the noblest. He proclaimed the horrors of the prison-house in the ears of his countrymen, and set before them the awful spectacle of the dead Numantians, with as rash and strong a delusion as that which carried the Knight of La Mancha into so many ludicrous scenes. It was an equally ludicrous effort which young Miguel Cervantes made to stir all those good homely folks, concerned about their own business, and enjoying the dances and pantomime of their comedies, and make them into heroes. They were not a heroic nation, but only commonplace souls, incapable even of comprehending the sacrifice of Numantia, and caring more for their maravedis than their liberties. But he did not realise this till long after, when many trials and struggles had tamed his spirit, and he had ceased to think that he could make Spain godlike, and had turned to the less impossible task of studying her, to see not what she ought to be but what she really was. His gloomy and awful tragedy was the climax of his own knight-errantry. He saw the futility of it afterwards, and laughed, setting his knight of the rueful countenance to tilt with the windmills;—but he was in deadly

earnest when he built the gloomy towers, and that great funeral-pile in the market-place, where the men of Numantia heaped all their wealth, their dead children and wives, then died themselves to crown the patriotic sacrifice.

We are told,—and it is a curious and touching instance of the fidelity of race, and the truth which after all lay under the noble folly of Cervantes,—that during the siege of Saragossa the tragedy of Numantia was performed in that city amid the enthusiastic plaudits of the besieged. Himself would have pardoned all for this fine revenge and amends.

CHAPTER IV.

COMMISSARY AND TAX-GATHERER.

CERVANTES was about thirty,—according to his mother's affidavit, "a little more or less," but according to the dates, thirty-three,—in full perfection of manhood, when he returned to Spain. The very sight of the beloved coasts (as says the Captive) "delivered us from all our troubles and losses, so that we forgot them all as if they had never been; so sweet is it to regain freedom." And when the vessel touched the shore, "we leaped all to land, and kissed the soil, giving thanks with tears of joyful satisfaction to God our Lord for the incomparable goodness which He had shown us." Who can doubt that, like his hero, the young and eager soldier returning home, his heart full of highest hope and tenderness, the joy of deliverance, the warm impulse of love and gratitude, the pleasure of seeing all that was dear to him, and feeling that all ills were over, and nothing but good to come, must have forgotten that Spain was not Paradise, and that there still might be disappointments and trials to meet in this longed-for land of his love and his dreams? And yet there must have been no small disenchantment in his return. The home at Alcalá

to all appearance had ceased to exist. His father, who had deprived himself of everything, and was "very poor, possessing nothing whatever," when he made his last appearance two years before in Madrid, was dead. So far as can be gathered, there was nobody to welcome the returning exile except his poor mother (as some think, married a second time) and sisters, one of whom was also married, and immersed in all the troubles of life. Except these poor women, nobody troubled themselves about that Saavedra of whom Hassan Pasha had said that his city and possessions were safe so long as the lame Spaniard could be kept quiet. Neither king nor people gave themselves any concern about this lame Spaniard now. A returned captive, a wounded soldier of Lepanto, might have been a nine days' wonder in his native town. In Madrid who cared about him or his wars past, or his career to come, his useless hand or his high heart? He must have dropped down as from heaven to earth when he stepped upon that Spanish soil which he had first kissed with tears of joy. In Algiers he had been a notable personage, an influence in the State, a man looked up to both by captives and pirates. He had made the whole Turkish community tremble, and moved the Christians with many an impulse of energy and hope. And he came home with his heart aglow, his ambition raised to the highest point, feeling it in him to head a Christian crusade, to sweep the seas free of pirates and the African shore from its nests of oppression, to liberate his countrymen, and enrich his country. But the moment his foot touched that blessed soil, that beloved land, Cervantes became nobody. He dropped into the nameless crowd, unknown and un-

seen, as if he had never existed. It is impossible to doubt that he was grateful and tender to the humble women-folk, poor kind souls, not able to sign their names, but able to give up all they had for his deliverance, who were the only beings who cared what became of Miguel Cervantes; but it is also impossible not to feel what an awakening, what a disenchantment, his arrival in Spain must have been. Nowhere, however, does he breathe a word of this. His cheerful soul, his hopeful disposition, his thoroughly sweet temper and manly steadfastness, seem to have put him above the reach of bitterness. He took the day as it came, *au jour le jour*, without either repining or anxiety, so far as can be discovered. Some thirty years later, very nearly at the end of his life, he gives us a portrait of himself, which may be introduced here, the reader correcting for himself the difference between the old man and the young. There is something in the very colour of it, the spirit of the lines in which it is drawn, which gives the warmest cheerful impression of a man whose courage and patience and happy nature were above all the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. "Should the reader," he says, "desire to see what kind of countenance and person belong to one who has been so bold as to present himself with so many inventions in the public places of the world and before the eyes of men, his portrait may be set down as follows:—

"Aquiline features, chestnut hair, a forehead smooth and unwrinkled, brilliant eyes, a nose curved but well proportioned, the beard of silver that twenty years ago was gold, a large moustache, a small mouth, . . . height between the two extremes, neither tall nor short, colour vivid, rather

white than brown, his shoulders a little bowed, his feet no longer light, — this is the portrait of the author of 'Galatea' and of 'Don Quixote,' and of him who made the 'Voyage to Parnassus,' and of many other works which have gone astray."

From this it is easy to present before the world the gay image of the cavalier of thirty, with his chestnut locks, his golden beard, and those eyes which at sixty were still *alegres*, more than brilliant, laughing and gay with the happy nature which no trouble could subdue. His shoulders were not bowed then, nor his feet heavy: Don Quixote was yet far in the distance, and the world was all before him. Alas! but he would be a bold or a stupid critic beyond even the nature of such, who would venture to pity this courageous and daring and joyous soul. "He was many years a soldier," he adds, as in a lower tone, a little falling back upon himself, though cheerful always, "and five years and a half in captivity, from whence he learned to have patience in adversity." For this noble young man when he came home, Spain had no better use than to send him off to the army to fight as a nameless private in campaigns which the world has forgotten. They were important enough then, we suppose, but it is hard even to remember what they were about now. He fought at the Azores, and in Portugal, throughout all King Philip's assaults upon the independence of that kingdom, where any nameless bowman or swordsman might have slain our Don Quixote a hundred times, before he had begun to be. And he was much at Lisbon, not without pleasure, not without harm, since from thence came his only child Isabel, whose mother is without even a name in his history. Rodrigo, his

brother, was also in these campaigns, and gained promotion, having attained the dignity of Alferez, which our dictionaries translate as Ensign, before the end of his days. Ensign! after all these now forgotten battles of the seas—Lepanto, Tunis, achievements which in the days of Rome would have deserved a naval crown—and years of less famous fighting after, captivity, and toil, and privation, and a ceaseless struggle. The brother who had the lame hand, and must have been hampered by the loss, though he was so proud of it, got nothing, not even the lowest grade of promotion; but the veteran Rodrigo, distinguished in one of these last battles, named in the despatches, one of the heroes of a forgotten victory, got, as we should say, *le vieux moustache*, after all his campaigns, his ensign's commission! And that was all the honour that ever came to the Saavedras, though one of them was to be, to all after-centuries, more than even Columbus, likewise unfortunate, the representative to the world in its beadroll of glories, of Spain.

Whether it was in Lisbon, which he loved ever after, and his experience of which conquered in him the Spanish prejudice against Portugal, which is so invariable between such near neighbours, that Cervantes wrote his first book, is uncertain. There are some authorities who believe it to have been written as an elaborate piece of love-making and tender offering to his bride; and some who, on the other hand, consider the "Galatea" to have been in honour of that nameless Portuguese lady who was the mother of Isabel. The matter is one of mere conjecture, supported only by the fact that he was married in 1584, the year in which

the "Galatea" was published. The book itself is like an old costume, so out of fashion that its beauties will be recognised by very few. It is a succession of eclogues, a prolonged and endless pastoral, in which shepherd meets shepherd, and lovely shepherdesses, all flowered and ribboned, drive many a gentle swain to despair. They sing in all the woods, behind every rock, these lovelorn youths, so that their cruel enchantresses cannot take a walk (which they do continually in pretty groups, Galatea and Florisa, Teolinda and Leonarda, Nisida and Blanca, and the beautiful Rosaura) without being stopped on the way, behind some hawthorn brake, or in some wooded shade, by the sound of a languishing lute, and the stanzas long drawn out, of some despairing appeal to one among them, or to the hard fates which have sentenced Griseldo to pine, and Lauso to bewail himself. It is said that Elicio, the principal shepherd, means Cervantes himself, and Galatea his bride, Catalina de Palazos: but it might with as much truth be said that an oak meant Cervantes, and a clematis his lady, for all the character there is in the shepherds and shepherdesses. It was from Italy, or rather it was from classic times and scenes, that the laws of a composition so artificial, yet so artless, so sweet, so unreal, so conventional, were derived: and it would almost seem that Cervantes, always ambitious, imagined for a moment, in his delight with the new toy of composition he had got in hand, that he was doing some great thing for Spain in thus introducing a new development of art. "Nobody can deny," he says, "that the study of this faculty (in past times so greatly esteemed, and with so much reason) draws with it more

than mediocre advantages, for it enriches the poet in his own language, and makes him master of the art of eloquence contained in it, for undertakings of more and higher importance; and opens the road to the narrower spirits who would shut up the abundance of the Castilian tongue in the brevity of its ancient forms." Of this emancipation he even declares that "I myself am a certain witness, knowing some who, with just right, when free from the hindrance which I have taken away, can prosecute with serenity a career so dangerous." It was evidently Cervantes's greatest pleasure to feel that he was not only doing something worthy his own genius, but also opening the way, taking away impediments, and making the pursuit of letters more possible to his countrymen. Perhaps it was a habit he had got from those days of captivity, when every one of his enterprises was for his comrades as much, if not more, than for himself, and he bore the brunt of all failures; and there is a fine kind of arrogance and self-importance in the magnanimity with which he places himself in the front, to overcome all difficulties, before he turns round with a benignant smile to the timid spectators behind to bid them follow. At the same time, while he declares the gentle flood of pastoral poetry which he is letting in upon the land to be so much for the advantage of the language, and the enlargement of Spanish genius, he excuses himself for his own devotion to the art, "in a time when poetry is so much out of favour," by bringing forward "the inclination I have always had to poetry, and my age, which, having scarcely gone beyond the limits of youth, has still a licence for such occupations." What a spring of life and vitality there

must have been in the man who, after all his campaigns and captivities, hard living, wandering, and privation, feels himself still at thirty-seven scarcely out of the limits of youth!

It would be almost as difficult to give an outline of the "Galatea" as of the 'Arabian Nights' or the 'Decameron' of Boccaccio. The pastoral strain opens with the songs of the enamoured Elicio, whose love for Galatea is neither accepted nor rejected, her virginal dignity being such that the prolonged worship of a volume or two is necessary before she can make up her mind to show him any favour; and it closes with a redoublement of delicate distress in the fear that Galatea, at last moved to acceptance of her lover, may be reft from him by the decision of her father in favour of another. But between these, how many gentle lovers flit across the scene—how many maidens, maidenly coy and reluctant—how many languishments of tuneful love, songs and stories, the adventures of the shepherds, the confidences of the shepherdesses, the pipes and the lutes, the moonlight nights and *still* noondays, and fresh Aurora lighting up the dewy shades! Prettier pastime could not be for the long unending days of a poetical Arcadia, where all was youth, and love, and virtuous sentiment, and endless constancy. Even jealousy scarcely enters this fairy scene, where rivals agree to spend their time together,—"thou with the sound of thy pipe publishing the pleasure or the pain which is caused by the face of Galatea when bright or when clouded; I with my lute in the silence of the tranquil nights, or in the heat of the sultry afternoons, under the fresh shade of those green trees by which our banks are adorned, aid-

ing thee to bear the heavy burden of thy cares, by giving heaven the cognisance of mine." But our busier times have lost relish for the sweetness long drawn out, of these prolonged and multiplied romances where every new wayfarer has another tale to tell, and the heroes and heroines gather like coveys of turtle-doves, each with his gentle mate. There are six books of the "Galatea," making two volumes, but still it is only a fragment; and up to the very end of his life it was a favourite idea of Cervantes—he who had scoffed all tales of chivalry out of fashion—to add something to the soft melodious folly of his pastoral,—a tender touch of paradox which is perfectly characteristic. With a half-consciousness of this delightful folly, and the mingling of love and ridicule which runs through his great work, and gives it one of its most powerful charms, Cervantes places "Galatea" in the library of Don Quixote.

"'What book is that?'—'The "Galatea" of Miguel de Cervantes,' said the barber.—'This Cervantes has been a great friend of mine for many years,' said the priest, 'and I know that he is more skilled in misfortunes than in verse: his book has some good intentions in it—something begun, but nothing finished. We must wait for the second part which he has promised: perhaps with its amendments will come that favourable reception which till now has been denied him. In the meantime, Señor gossip, keep it in your closet.'—'I am very well content to do so,' said the barber."

We must also add that in, so far as we know, the last words he ever wrote, the dedication to "Persiles," the old man, at the very close of his days, anticipates, if Heaven may spare him, "to finish the 'Galatea'"—a touching proof of the hold this favourite fancy had upon

his mind. It is such a strain as required no end—the kind of story-telling dear to children and all simple souls, which might flow on for ever. That he should have ventured to print it was no small piece of daring at the period.

This was in 1584, four years after his return from Algiers. In December of that year he married a lady whose name is magnificent enough to make up for a great many other deficiencies. She was Donna Catalina de Palazos y Salazar y Vozmediano—a branch, like himself, of a very old and famous, but evidently decayed and fallen house. Besides the blue blood, however, Donna Catalina did not come to her husband quite empty-handed. She brought him four or five vineyards, an orchard, besides forty-five hens, a cock, and a good deal of furniture,—of which his biographers are a little contemptuous, as proving the poverty of both, but which we may hope would be far from unacceptable to the penniless soldier. She was from Esquivias, renowned, as he himself tell us, "for its noble families and still more noble wines," which perhaps gave more value to the vineyards, though, alas! the best of them is only valued at 30,000 maravedis,—somewhere about £30. No doubt the mattresses and blankets, and all the linen enumerated so carefully, were very useful to the young couple in their start in life; but it does not seem quite clear whether they went to Madrid or remained for some time in Esquivias. Wherever they went, Cervantes began at this period, it would appear, to write systematically, composing comedies,—"twenty or thirty," he says. Pellicer tells us that, "in the time of Lope," the mana-

gers gave "eight hundred reals"—somewhere about two hundred francs—for each comedy; but it does not seem likely that the most economical family could subsist upon any such small and uncertain provision. He appears, however, to have been employed in one or two small Government commissions in Spain and Africa; and it seems likely that the vineyards in Esquivias were far from an unimportant part of the household provision. For some years after his marriage, Cervantes is described, in the law documents in which he figures, as of "Esquivias;" yet he is supposed to have lived in Madrid, where he formed part of a society of literary persons, all famous enough in their time—much more famous than the old soldier with his lame hand, who did his best to pipe along with them in sonnets and redondillas, and all the niceties of artificial verse. Of his "twenty or thirty" comedies, it is doubtful if any remain, since it would appear that those he published at the end of his life were written later. This life of literary activity lasted about three years. It was a period full of that spurious literary excitement which makes periodical eruption in the mental history of a nation, and there was a great deal of melodious twittering in the Spanish capital, where several societies had come into existence which were given up to the delights of poetical sentiment, where the members took sentimental names (one was Sincero), and expended a good deal of mutual admiration. It is not recorded that Cervantes was a member of the Academia Imitatoria, or of any other of the elegant cabals that succeeded it. But he lent his voice to the chorus of mutual compliment, and praised his contemporaries lustily, with not very much return, so

far as appears. The moment came, however, when either he tired of the theatre or the theatre of him. He would seem to imply that the latter was the case; for in the same breath with which he says, "I found other things to occupy me, and cast down the pen and the comedies," he adds that "the great Lope de Vega—that prodigy of nature"—arose, and became the king of comedy: as if the one fact was in some way connected with the other. Though he assures the reader, with his usual laugh breaking out into the midst of the gravity and even self-assertion of the preface to his comedies, that "they were represented without offerings of cucumbers, or any other missiles, and ran their course without hissing or cries or noise," which does not look like the record of any serious success—yet he adds that some points in them won general and warm applause; and he claims to have modified the comedy altogether, changing its length from five acts to three, and introducing new combinations. But it was, at the best, a precarious means of living, even had there not arisen a king of comedy to reign upon the stage.

Cervantes then "found other things to occupy him." He did that which most people, at that period and at this, would think much the best thing for a man to do,—sought a permanent situation instead of trusting to the precarious support of literature. He obtained a small Government appointment—a situation under the commissary-general, who had it in hand to provision the Invincible Armada, then being prepared for that disastrous voyage which was to have stricken heretic England with terror, and which succeeded only in covering Spain with confusion. It is a curious

sort of link of connection which brings us in sight, as it were, of our own shores, and of what was then going on in England. To think that while England, with that panic which is generally with us the beginning of some act of daring, awaited the coming of those ships which were intended to crush her, Cervantes should have been sweeping the Andalusian plains for corn and forage to provision them, is a fact that somehow seems to bring him more distinctly before us. It was not a very dignified office. For years after he pursued this kind of life, getting in commissariat stores (in one of his raids he got himself excommunicated in consequence of having carried off by mistake some corn belonging to the Church), gathering taxes, receiving rents,—so strange a mode of occupation for his powers, that it makes us think of Burns "gauging auld wives' barrels." Spain had no better work for Cervantes than Scotland for her ploughman-poet. It must be said, however, that there are vague intimations of what Navarrete calls "persecutions occasioned by some imprudence," which, whenever there appeared a hope of a new beginning for him, turned it upside down. Of what character these imprudences were, no one apparently has any information. No doubt he was too vivacious in speech, too keen of sight for one whose fate was in the hands of others. And he had a determined sense of his own claims upon the Government, though there is no bitterness as of a disappointed man even in the satires to which he gave large and liberal vent. The most remarkable thing, perhaps, in his whole career,—so poor and laborious, so shifty and wandering as it was, so unsuccessful from beginning to end,—is that not a bitter word, not

a harsh tone of complaint, scarcely even the pathos of a contrast between the hopes with which he began and the many humiliations of his existence, ever breaks from Cervantes. His philosophy is rarely unlightened by a smile; his satires have no sneers, but only laughter in them; he sees a hundred evils round about him, and remarks them, and goes upon his way, not less confiding in the next frank accost, in the next hopeful appearance. Nowhere is he bitter upon the follies of men; and he never loses his own cheerful sense of merit, nor ever condescends to the acrid self-assertion of the injured. Such a man as he is, gaining his bread most humbly—always poor, kept down in the lowest occupations, he who once hoped to move a world: he yet never claims pity from others, never indulges—a yet more dear privilege—in pity of himself.

This beginning of humble official life seems to have necessitated a removal of the family to Seville, "the asylum of the poor and refuge for the destitute," as he calls it—at this time the richest and most active of Spanish cities, which, it is said, had besides the advantage of being the home of another and richer branch of the Saavedras. From this as his headquarters, and with two respectable citizens of the town (neither of them, however, Saavedras) for his sureties, he pursued apparently for about three years more his work of commissary. The Armada sailed invincible, in the beginning of his career, with the first-fruits of his gatherings: but was beaten and driven back,—such scraps of it as got home at all,—while Cervantes was still going from village to village provisioning the army with which he had once fought, and, let us hope, comforting himself with that

thought. In 1590, most likely sick at heart with these weary travellings, and the exactions which he must have been forced to make, and finding in his new occupation not much more permanence or hope of settled comfort than in the old, he once more made an appeal to the king. "Finding himself so bare of money, and not better provided with friends," as he says of one of his heroes,[1] "he adopted the remedy to which many a spendthrift in that city (the great city of Seville) has recourse —that is, to betake themselves to the Indies, the refuge of the despairing sons of Spain." But even this resource was denied to Cervantes. Here is the humble memorial with which, after all these years, the captive of Algiers at last approached "great Philip," as once he had hoped to do in a great and generous cause :—

"SIRE,—Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra declares: That he has served your Majesty many years in such campaigns by sea and land as have occurred within twenty-one years from this time, particularly in the great naval combat, where he received many wounds, in which he lost one hand from a shot; the year following he was at Navarino, and afterwards at Tunis and La Goleta; and, coming to this Court with letters from Señor Don John and from the Duke of Sesa, recommending him to the favour of your Majesty, was made captive on the galley Sol, he and his brother, who had also served your Majesty in the same campaigns, and was carried to Algiers, where, by the ransom paid for him, his patrimony was ruined, and all the property of his parents, and the fortunes of his sisters, who have been reduced to poverty by ransoming their brothers. As soon as they were freed, they again took service with your Majesty's troops in the kingdom of Portugal, under the Marquis of Santa Cruz, and up to the present time have continued to serve your Majesty—the one

[1] The Jealous Estremaduran.

in Flanders, with the rank of ensign; and the other, Miguel de Cervantes, was he who arranged the papers of the Alcalde of Mostagan, and went to Oran by order of your Majesty, and since has served in Seville in the business of the Armada, under the orders of Antonio de Guevara, as is proved by the evidence which he holds; and in all this time has received no grace or recompense. He therefore begs and supplicates humbly that your Majesty would grant to him an office in the Indies—one of the three or four at present vacant, which are those of Treasurer of New Granada, Governor of Soconosso in Guatemala, Paymaster of the Galleys of Cartagena, or Corregidor of the city of La Paz. To whichsoever of these offices your Majesty may be pleased to appoint him, he will gratefully accept it, being a man of ability sufficient for the charge, and deserving of your Majesty's favour, and desirous of continuing in your Majesty's service and spending his life in it as he has done that part of his life which is past."

This humble application, however, met with no success. Some of the biographers say that it was received favourably, then put aside by some malign influence: at all events, it came to nothing. The work of Cervantes was to be for Spain and the world at his own cost: no steady pay or permanent household comfort, even in exile, was to be his. For such men there is no mercy in heaven or earth. He was one of those fated to fight for his daily bread from day to day, and to whom no favour or help ever came.

When this application failed, Cervantes returned to his old wandering life, as a humble agent of the commissariat. Four years later he got a commission to collect the royal taxes in Granada. His surety for this, Don Francisco Suarez Gasco, being for some reason or other considered sufficient by the author-

ities of the exchequer, Cervantes and his wife were called upon to execute a deed by which Donna Catalina bound herself to give up her own dowry if necessary, in case of any deficiency in her husband's accounts. The form of the bond by which this poor lady undertook to despoil herself of her little dower is very curious. She swears "by God our Lord, and by Santa Maria, His blessed mother, and by the text of the four holy Gospels, and by the sign of the cross on which she places her hand," to give up every privilege secured to her as a wife or by her marriage-contract, or the laws made for the protection of wives, and never to allege that she "was deceived or frightened by her husband, or constrained by force or flattery" to make this promise, and also "neither to ask, nor cause to be asked, absolution or relaxation of her oath, from our most Holy Father, or his nuncio or delegate." It must, one would think, have been sadly necessary to get the appointment when such a solemn undertaking was entered into. The end of this commission seems shrouded in mystery. Some small defalcation in his accounts there seems to have been, whether by the treachery of others or by mishap of his own seems difficult to say. It is proved that he was in prison in Seville for a short period; and there are citations without number calling upon him to appear and produce his accounts within so many days from the date of each warrant, the repetition of which proves that he had not done so: all follow, however, that the sum was very small in which he was deficient, and no sort of shadow seems to have rested upon his individual honour. But he disappears in these clouds, "like a drowned man under the waves," says M. Chasles. "We can follow

him with difficulty till 1598: then he escapes from our sight—no indication, no document guides us to divine his life. From 1598 to 1603 he is eclipsed. One sole fact is certain—that the soldier-poet lived in the depths of poverty, and that there was, somewhere in Andalusia or La Mancha, a prison, in which he meditated and laboured, and in which he wrote the first part of 'Don Quixote.'"

This prison, we must add, exists chiefly in tradition. There is warrant for believing, as we have said, that Cervantes was imprisoned for a short time in Seville on account of the non-production of his papers and balance-sheets in the matter of the Granada taxes above referred to; and we have his own word for it that 'Don Quixote' was "born in a prison where all discomforts have their home, and noisy strife its habitation." But this is all that is known on the subject. On the other hand, there is a tradition that he was kept in confinement, for some reason unknown, in the little town of Argamasilla de Alba, supposed to be the native village of Don Quixote. A priest residing there, after careful search of all the records, allows that he can find no warrant for this belief except "the invariable tradition of the inhabitants of the place, among whom it has been handed down from father to son that the house called Medrano is the prison in which Miguel de Cervantes was confined for five years." It is remarkable, however, considering the multiplicity of documents which exist as to the other points in his career, that a matter so important as this should be without any proof whatever. And it must be recollected that two other Miguels de Cervantes existed at the same period, and were both, by their respective parishes, asserted to be the

author of 'Don Quixote.' But whether there is any truth in the tradition as touching the rustic jail of Argamasilla, or if 'Don Quixote' was begun in the weary weeks of that imprisonment at Seville, not even most learned historians can tell.

There can be little doubt, however, that the wanderings of the humble commissary in search of oil and grain through all the farmhouses and villages, and the struggles of the tax-collector to extort the king's dues from many an astute and stupid clown—the Sancho Panzas of the soil—must have furnished Cervantes with something of the infinite store of human character, and variety of country manners, the vivid reflection and impersonification of his time—which have made 'Don Quixote' one of the half-dozen books which the world can never forget. The country inns where he put up in his endless journeys, the weary roads which he traversed, the trees under which he rested in the sultry hours of the afternoon, and all the homely people about the little towns; their poor but lofty *caballeros*, their well-to-do rustics, their rural feastings and ceremonies, with now a grandee passing on his way, and now a religious procession, and now a train of desperadoes for the galleys; the hamlets where the priest and the surgeon represented some elements of knowledge, and read and talked between themselves of authors and universities, though so far away from anything of the kind; all the humours of the fresh and primitive country, its frolics, its obtuseness, its homely wisdom, its rude jokes and pleasantry,—expanded and opened up under the keen sight and universal sympathy of the wanderer. Who can doubt that when he left Madrid and then Seville, with their literary clubs and poetical song-birds, Cervantes

must have believed that he was going out of the world? But, on the contrary, he was going into the world,—a world as much more interesting than all the coteries, as it was more extensive and varied. He has opened it before us, large and broad and simple, each village a little universe, each day's journey an epitome of life itself, glowing under the sunshine, white in the moonlight, musing, philosophising, jesting, making merry, full of that perpetual criticism which humanity always makes upon itself. He was a poor and disappointed and hard-working man,—a man who had indulged in many hopes and dreams, and found them all come to nothing, and had now nothing to look for but that going down the hill of life which, in all circumstances, is sad enough; yet, as we have said, there is not a touch of bitterness nor of complaint nor of self-pity in all the tale. He travels with his knight-errant through the deserts and deceptions of life with never a sneer upon his genial, gentle countenance—nothing worse than a laugh, hearty and frank, rousing all the echoes. His ridicule is perfectly genuine, not put on; no mask for sentiment, like Sterne's, but as real and natural as his laughter, yet never unkind. His true fun and hearty mirth, and that delightful sense of the ludicrous, which is the foe of all false sentiment, are almost too honest to attain always to the height of that more delicate faculty which we call humour, which is more than half tenderness. Cervantes is tender, too, and as he goes on grows more and more touched by the pathos of his own conception; but at first that Quixote who is himself, who can be no other than himself, calls from him the heartiest glee of laughter. What folly all those old chimeras were! how supremely ludicrous! What fun to be so oddly, absurdly taken in! But yet there he

stands in spite of all, always the same Miguel Cervantes, not beaten yet, not intending to be beaten, and free to laugh till the tears come into his eyes, seeing through it all, but finding no grievance, bitter against no one, blaming no one, not even himself. We know no other example of ridicule so kindly, so good-humoured, yet so unrestrained.

And now we are free to take the profit, and reflect how much better it was for us and Spain that great Philip paid no attention to his petitions, and gave him no comfortable place to take a little ease in after the labours and struggles of his early days, and all those years in his Majesty's service. Far better!—if he had not gone roving about through those farms and villages, dusty and weary, and lodged in these poor little inns, and lived on that hard fare, not knowing, perhaps, from week to week, how the poor women were managing to get bread to eat at home, we should never have had our Sancho Panza, nor known that old Spain—that big piece of Christendom, with all the good and evil in it. Far better for us;—and as for Cervantes, what of him? Is it not the rule of all higher life, in humble following of the greatest life of all, that one man should always be the sufferer for the people? But no man in all the round of genius has borne this fate with the same good-humour and dauntless laughing courage as Cervantes. Most of them grumble, it must be allowed; he never. He made a fight now and then for his rights; but not getting them, never sat down to complain, but laughed and trudged on. "A merry heart goes all the way; the sad tires in a mile-a."

CHAPTER V.

THE COMEDIES AND NOVELS.

It is not quite easy to identify the literary work of Cervantes during this period of external activity. It was, however, the noon of his actual life, the time in which the mind and all the faculties are at their fullest force, and it is difficult to believe that he was merely accumulating experience and doing nothing positive. "Galatea," the pastoral which is more or less connected with his love-making, both legitimate and otherwise, was published in 1584, four years after his return from Algiers; and for twenty years after this he was silent, so far as we are aware, putting forth nothing by way of the press, and either banished from the stage by more popular dramatists or flourishing there obscurely. The latter would seem to be the true hypothesis, since among the papers which have been recently discovered, and which have revealed so much of his life, is a contract dated 1592, by which Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra binds himself to supply six comedies to a certain Roderigo Osorio, manager of, in all likelihood, a *troupe* of strolling players. The conditions of this contract are curious. Cervantes binds himself to write them "with all necessary

care;" while, on the other hand, the *impresario* is pledged to produce each on the stage within twenty days after its delivery to him. "And if it is acknowledged," adds this odd document, with something of Cervantes's proper accent in its formal voice, "that it is one of the best comedies represented in Spain, you shall pay me fifty ducats, either on the day of the representation or within the first eight days." Whether the comedies which he published long afterwards were in whole or part the fruit of this contract, or whether the productions thus engaged for perished prematurely, it is impossible to tell. None of the published plays certainly could be considered as among "the best comedies represented" anywhere. He found them, he says, on looking over them, "not so bad that they were not worth bringing out of the darkness;" but we doubt whether the conscientious reader would agree with the dramatist. It must be admitted, however, that there is no duller reading than second-rate plays, and that it requires a particular light of genius to carry the reader over the difficulties of a composition intended for the stage rather than the library. And there is little of the earnestness of intention which gives a personal value to the dramas of the captivity, in these productions, though several of them touch upon the same subject, and have the same scenery for their background. The "Gallardo Español" and the "Gran Sultana" both treat of that conflict between the Christian and the Moor, which so easily changes in the hands of the romancer into the passion of the Eastern master for the Christian slave who reveals to him a higher kind of beauty than is known in his seraglio. The "Gallardo Español" is a

change upon this theme. That brilliant gallant is a Saavedra, a knight in the Christian garrison of Oran, whom the Moorish princess Arlaxa, hearing of his fame and wonderful courage, desires at any cost to see. The play opens with her commission to her Eastern lover Ali-Muzel to bring to her feet this Christian hero, this "Atlantis of Spain, this new Cid, the pride of Christendom," giving the Moor her word that she will be his, if "the adventure ends to my satisfaction," an equivocal promise. And the enterprise is not an easy one, for Ali-Muzel is not to kill this prodigy of valour, but to bring him living and safe to the feet of the princess. The Moor sets out accordingly for Oran, and under the walls of the city launches his challenge at Don Fernando, who is forbidden by his commander to reply to it, but who steals out of the city at night to meet his challenger. In the meantime Ali-Muzel, persuaded by a treacherous rival, has gone back to his mistress, and Don Fernando, wandering in search of him, is taken by the Moors, and carried off as a captive. After this follows an imbroglio of accidents and disguises. Fernando, when brought before Arlaxa, conceals his real name, and calls himself Lozano. He is followed from Oran by a disguised youth — in reality Marguerita, a Spanish lady who, like Arlaxa, has fallen in love with his reputation. The scene changes from Oran to the city of Arlaxa and back again; the Christians besieging the Moors, and the Moors the Christians; while the Spanish gallant, the hero, now defends the one, and now the other, on a sort of rule of fair-play rather than any partisanship. The end of all these cross-purposes is happy, and each lady is consigned to the right lover at the last. The

only touch of contemporary life in the play, so strangely different in this respect from those which record Cervantes's personal experiences, is in the person of a certain Buytrago, an always hungry and thirsty soldier, who, when there is nothing going on in the shape of fighting (a trade which, on the whole, he prefers), occupies himself in collecting money to buy souls out of purgatory. He is the Matamoros, the buffoon and braggart of the play; but his appearance with his money-box inscribed "For the souls in purgatory," and his cry of "Give me money for the souls, señores," is a curious bit of Spanish realism, in the midst of all the fantastic romance of the tale. "How much have you got to-day?" the Governor asks him. "No more than three *quartos*," says this strange agent of devotion. "And what have you bought with them?" "Almost nothing—lights [of an animal] and a hundred anchovies." "Enough for to-day," says his questioner. "By Saint Nuflo! scarcely enough to put a tooth in," cries the hungry pilgrim. "It is because he is so great an eater that the Count has given him this money-box that he may support himself by it," one of the party explains. "Much good it does me," says Buytrago: . . . but," he adds, "if I eat for six, I fight for seven — nay, give me stuff to fill my mouth, and give me Moors by twos or by thousands, and you will see what Buytrago is, and that he has a right to eat for ten since he can fight for twenty." Whenever this frank mercenary appears he is always hungry, till the reader grows weary of his stock phrases. But the curious apparition of the money-box with its label, and the cry of the glutton for the souls in purgatory, is a real bit of revelation from the Spanish

streets, amid so much artificial fiction ringing harshly true.

The "Gran Sultana" is another Eastern play, showing how the Grand Turk himself fell a victim to the beauty of Catalina de Ovieda, and how she was made the Gran Sultana, chief, and indeed only, wife of that potentate, who objects neither to her Christianity nor her nationality, and is the most adoring and indulgent of lovers. This story had some foundation in fact, as it is possible the story of the "Gallant Spaniard" may also have had. That Cervantes should have given that hero his own family name is perhaps a mere piece of family pride, but perhaps, also, was suggested by some family tradition. The "Casa de los Zelos" is a still more wild and confused composition, in which a number of great names are introduced—the Emperor Charlemagne, Roland, Bernardo del Carpio, and other magnificent medieval personages, being the chief actors. How these heroes wander through Ardennes in pursuit of the lovely Angelica, finding and losing her, crossing each other's paths, with perpetual outbursts of the jealousy which gives its name to the play, amid a maze of shepherds, satyrs, wandering adventurers, and all kinds of enchantments, the spirit of Merlin speaking among the shades and directing the action, it is scarcely necessary to describe. The scene recalls to us curiously those scenes in Ardennes which we know so much better; but Reynaldos and Roldan, and Bernardo and Angelica, are not like our Rosalind and Orlando; nor is there anything in the rude Spanish forest of enchantment which can be compared with that fine ideal world overflowing with life and wit, and poetry and song, the Ardennes

in which Jacques met the fool, and where the most delightful of Shakespeare's maidens mocked and flouted, and wooed and wept, and played upon every string of feeling and fancy. It is interesting to find Cervantes there too, though he did not put his heart in it, but only fooled his audience with wild inventions not worthy of his genius. When we think that the two were contemporary, and that Shakespeare, dreaming, with a smile about his mouth, "Now am I in Arden," might have met there in the spirit that other more sad than he, who encountered fate with a still more courageous smile, this possible meeting in the visionary wood lights up its romantic bosquets with a new light. "These woods," says Bernardo in the Spanish play, "are those in which by every road and byway wonderful adventures are continually to be found." We can scarcely help believing that round some corner the Spaniard must suddenly walk into that glade where Rosalind is saying, "Come, woo me," or Touchstone with contemplative humour regarding the "poor thing" which is "mine own." But the great enchanters passed without seeing each other, being only men like the rest of us—and one of them not much thinking what he was doing among his medieval heroes.

The "Laberinto de Amor" is a still more confused web of intrigue. There is a fair princess, Rosamira, the daughter of a duke, who is asked in marriage by another duke, Manfredo, and denounced as a personage of light behaviour by a young student, Dagobert, who turns out to be a third duke, her true lover, and whose accusation is intended merely as an expedient to delay the marriage until he himself can carry her off. Two other princesses,

as young and fair, wander about through the bewildering scene, who, in the guise of shepherds, students, and various other masquerades, haunt the footsteps of Manfredo and of a fourth young duke, Anastasio. One of these errant damsels is the sister of the latter, the other his cousin, whom love for him has moved to this wild pilgrimage of love. These six beautiful and royal persons appear and disappear very much like puppets; but all comes right at last, and the respective lovers pair themselves appropriately after a succession of disguises, changes of dress and semblance, and all the conventional business of the primitive theatre.

The "Ruffian Dichoso," or "Happy Rascal," as it may be freely translated, is of a more surprising character, and partakes of the peculiarities of the miracle-play, the first of all theatrical conceptions. It is the story of a young profligate of the Don Juan type, in whom at his first appearance there is a glimmering of the dauntless gaiety, courage, and unbounded resources of that favourite of the drama. But the Happy Rascal is converted and becomes a saint—or rather, to speak more correctly, converts himself. Through all his wickedness he has been pious, giving alms for the souls in purgatory, and not forgetting to say his prayers: "Be a sinner or be a saint," one of his companions adjures him, complaining that he goes off into Ave Marias just when his friends are waiting for him. The decisive moment comes when Lugo, having vowed that he will become a highwayman if he loses in a gambling party, gains largely, and is suddenly brought to himself. His vow to make himself a highwayman was, he says, musing, "the clear and manifest error of a blind fancy," and there is no law to compel the fulfilment of

a bad vow. What if in this change of fortune he should become a monk instead? And so he does, with a devotion which equals the energy of his former disorderly career. The second act, however, is the most characteristic. Here we are carried to Africa, as in the former plays, and introduced to a certain Donna Anna, a sick lady, to whom her doctor announces that she must die—an intimation by no means well received by the invalid, who has been a sinner, and who is deeply alarmed by the sentence. "All this," says Cervantes gravely, at the beginning of the scene, "is historical truth." Lugo, the former Don Juan, now Fray Christoval de la Cruz, hears of her trouble; and being by this time an example of sanctity, as he formerly was of riot, makes over to the dying woman all his good deeds and holiness, endowed with which she dies peacefully and is carried up to heaven, while he begins to work out the sins which she has left him in exchange for his virtues. This curious drama ends with the confusion of Lucifer and his angels, who have appeared on the scene in a vain attempt to impair the perfection of Fray Christoval, and his final canonisation.

The eight *Entremeses*—short dramatic pieces, *levers de rideau*, as we might call them—are of much the same order of merit. Several of them are variations of a well-worn theme—the tricks played in his own house upon a jealous husband. One or two of them treat the same subjects as are afterwards taken up with much more grace and freedom in the "Exemplary Novels:" they are sometimes studies for a larger picture, sometimes mere farces, noisy dialogues without much story or meaning. The only one we need linger upon is the curious little

piece called the "Juez de los Divorcios"—the "Divorce Court," so to speak. Three or four couples appear before him one after another, tumultuously pleading, on the one side, the infirmities or cruelties of the husbands; on the other, the ill-temper and folly of the wives. All make long speeches in their own self-defence, and in accusation of their partners. The judge, overwhelmed by all this eloquence, has assured them that, however just their complaints may be, it is necessary to set them forth in writing, and to prove them by witnesses, before the law can help them: "But," he adds, "what is this?—music and guitars in my court! This is a novelty indeed." The music is in celebration of a feast given by a pair whom the judge had "reconciled, calmed, and pacified" a few days before, and who now come to invite him to the *gran fiesta* with which they celebrate their reunion. The little piece ends with a song, "The worst music is better than the best divorce."

Through all these strange productions there is here and there a glimmer of genius, which seems to have but played with each subject — not taking the trouble to lay hold upon it. Sometimes a suggestion of something better to come shows dimly within them. A faint shadowing forth of Sancho Panza in his island is in the Alcalde's judgments in "Pedro de Urde malas," and a clumsy suggestion of the "Jealous Estremaduran" in the "Viejo Zeloso." But the curious rigmarole of talk, the heaped-up incidents, the commonplace mystifications of the plots, belong to a level much lower than that on which we expect to see Cervantes. His was not a dramatic genius. It was hampered and

restrained by the rules of play-writing. Its natural method was that of the historian, upon whom there is no such bondage—whose *rôle* it is to tell the events as they occur in all their native lawlessness and incoherence, without any of that balance and proportion which belong to art. Perhaps even the bondage of verse was more than his fine genius could bear. The publisher who first brought these works to light informed Cervantes, as he tells us in his preface, "that an author [manager] of title had told him that much might be looked for from my prose, but nothing from my verse," —a sweeping sentence, which Cervantes repeats with candour, if with a little bitterness. "They are not so tasteless, in my opinion, but that they may please some," he says in his dedication. But we do not think any lover of Cervantes would be very sorry if the eight comedies and the eight interludes were swept away out of the library of the world. It is true that they are not worse than many others which have been supposed to give a special character and unusual fertility and abundance to the dramatic literature of Spain.

The "Exemplary Novels," which were published at a still later date, also bear signs of having been composed in this middle portion of his life. The scene of some of the most important is laid in Seville; and it seems more natural that they should all have been written anterior to 'Don Quixote,' than that the writer who had launched into that great work, and found in it so completely the medium of expression which he required, should have returned afterwards to the composition of these lesser studies. They are very superior to the comedies, and are written with great

grace and charm of style, full of Spanish character and life.

"I call them exemplary," Cervantes says, "because, if you rightly consider them, there is not one of them from which you may not draw some useful example. My intention has been to set up, in the midst of our community, a billiard-table, at which every one may amuse himself without hurt to body and soul; for innocent recreations do good rather than harm. One cannot always be at church, or saying one's prayers, or engaged in one's business, however important it may be; there are hours for recreation when the wearied mind should take repose. It is to this end that alleys of trees are planted to walk in, waters are conveyed to different fountains, hills are levelled, and gardens are cultivated with such care. One thing I boldly declare: could I by any means suppose that these Novels would excite any bad thought or desire in those who read them, I would rather cut off the hand with which I wrote them than give them to the public."

Ingenious editors and translators have balked Cervantes in this protestation, by hunting out and adding to the stories thus collected that of the "Tia Fingida," which he never himself published, and which has been made much of—solely, it seems to us, on account of being supposed to be the exception to the general purity of his writings. These stories, however, would not perhaps strike a modern as so entirely irreproachable as Cervantes imagined them to be. There is here and there in them a touch of the frank indecency, meaning no particular harm, of the age, but nothing that can harm anybody who is not on the outlook for impropriety. The "random youth" of Andalusia and Castile—afloat about the world when they ought to be at their studies, falling sometimes into very bad company

at tunny fisheries[1] and other such scenes of low excitement or adventure, sometimes caught by a lovely face, abandoning their own rank for the love of a Preciosa or a Costanza, but never ceasing to be hidalgos, gentlemen of honour and truth — fill most of the varied scenes. Sometimes we find these young cavaliers mixed up with a bit of Italian adventure, with a grandiose touch, as in the "Lady Cornelia;" sometimes putting off their fine clothes, leaving their father's house, and their luxurious life, to wander about with a gipsy *troupe* or take service in an inn. Cervantes was fond of inns. Perhaps it was in them that he chiefly learned to know the full and varied country-life upon which he was thrown when it became clear that the polished circles of Madrid and the favours of the Court had no advancement for him. The muleteers coming in with their packs, the squabbles of the courtyard, the talk, and the tinkling of guitars, and the songs with which somebody is always ready to entertain the company as they sit in the evenings about the door or in the court, must have many a day afforded amusement to the wandering commissary as he rested in his inn after his toils. And now and then a wandering Bachelor or Licentiate, a couple of students, would come in to vary the humble assembly; or a fine party of ladies and gentlemen, rousing the innkeeper and his household to excitement and exertion, while the lowly guests looked on amused with the spectacle; or the Curé and the surgeon, as in 'Don Quixote,' would add their rustic philosophy, and eagerly ask the news of town, and how

[1] Described in the "Fregona Ilustre" as the haunt of the lowest adventurers, and the most lawless dissipation.

things were going at Court, and what new tales of chivalry or high-flown poesies were being produced in Madrid. There is scarcely a chapter in which we are not introduced to this free and simple company, and hear the hum of their talk through all the comings and goings, the rapid steps of the servants indoors, the fainter chorus of other conversations, the serenade outside. In the "Fregona Ilustre," or "Noble Serving-maid," almost the whole action of the story is carried on in the inn, where she waits upon the guests with that grace and modesty which at once betray her real importance as a noble foundling to be claimed by-and-by. The hero here becomes the ostler of the establishment, and such an ostler as innkeeper was never before blessed with; while his comrade, not a lover, gets into all manner of amusing scrapes outside. One can imagine Cervantes to have seen all the romance going on as he sat weary in the cool of the evening, and talked, and noted everything. When the noble parents arrive, what commotion! The ostler steals away, covering his face as well as he can, and trembling lest he should be discovered, yet getting a moment to whisper to the lovely waiting-woman, "That is my father." The story is of the wildest romance, but the life is as genuine as if Costanza and Tommaso had been possible personages. What does it matter? lovers are fantastic creations everywhere: but all their surroundings are true.

Preciosa the Gitana is another lovely flower of romance: a gipsy girl of such purity, discretion, and wit as never was seen in a commonplace world, everything in her lot which might be imagined likely to impair her perfection acting in a contrary way for its enhance-

ment. She is the original of another and better-known, though not so wise or witty heroine, the Esmeralda of Victor Hugo. When she goes into Madrid with her companions, singing and dancing for the entertainment of the crowd, the people in the streets who collect about her, and the gallants in the gaming-house who call her from their window (precisely like a club-window, though the loveliest of dancing gipsies would scarcely move the old gentlemen from their newspapers there), and the party in the house of the Senor Teniente who crowd round her but cannot find among them a single *quarto* to cross her hand, are all as real as flesh and blood can make them. The "young gentleman richly dressed, his sword and dagger all ablaze with gold, his hat looped up by a jewelled band and adorned with plumes of various colours," who meets them on the way, and whose father's name, Cervantes gravely informs us, is "suppressed for obvious reasons," brings us back to pure romance. He becomes a gipsy for the love of Preciosa, and joins in all the wanderings of their life, only excusing himself from the thieving, which was a necessary part of his new vocation, by dividing a sum of money among the tribe to make up to them for his want of diligence in this particular. And as a matter of course, Preciosa turns out, like Costanza, to be a great lady, and a most fit match for her Don Juan. In another of the tales, "Las Dos Doncellas," it is two disguised ladies whom we find instead of the young cavalier, both of them animated by despairing devotion to a faithless lover. But the most remarkable of Cervantes's tales are, we think, the two which, leaving this easy ground of romance altogether, give, in one case, to the character of the jealous husband,

so well known to the drama in all ages, an originality rarely attained; and in another, break fresh ground among the vagabonds of Spain in a way which has furnished suggestions to more than one great novelist. The story of "Rinconete and Cortadillo" is not a story at all, but a sketch of the introduction of two little rascals, sharp as street-boys proverbially are, and setting out to seek their fortune with the frankest dishonesty of purpose, to the robber-society of Seville. How Cervantes could have acquired the kind of information necessary to enable him to paint with so much relish the bland yet arbitrary Monipodio, monarch of this criminal kingdom, and all the swashbucklers and devout hypocrites who form his court, it is difficult to conjecture; but the picture bears upon it every mark of truth. Monipodio is so like the Duke Hildebrod, and his domain so entirely the Alsatia into which Sir Walter introduces his readers in the 'Fortunes of Nigel,' that it is impossible to believe that the one picture did not in some degree suggest the other. And Victor Hugo's community of the Truands in 'Notre Dame de Paris,' though more serious, and painted in deeper tragic colours such as his genius prefers, would also seem to have owed something to the same model. Monopodio gives audience in the *pátio*, or paved court of his house, where the mob of his clients walk up and down, while he settles the business of one and another. In a little room adjoining is a figure of Our Lady and a vessel for holy water, before which various members of the company pay their devotions. The head of the fraternity asks the real names of the newcomers, since though it is, he says, prudent to conceal their origin from others, "between ourselves there

must be no concealment," for the following admirable reasons :—

"It is our custom to have a certain number of masses said every year for the souls of our dead and of the benefactors of our society; and we provide for the payment of the priests who say them by setting apart a portion of our spoils for that purpose. These masses thus said and paid for are of great service to the souls aforesaid. Among our benefactors we count the alguazil, who gives us warning; the advocate, who defends us; the executioner, who takes pity upon us when we have to be whipped; and the man who, when we are running along the street, with the people in full cry after us bawling 'Stop thief!' throws himself between us and our pursuers, and checks the torrent, saying, 'Let the poor wretch alone, his lot is hard enough; let him go, and his crime will be his punishment.' We also count among our benefactors the good wenches who aid us by their labours when we are in prison or at the galleys; our fathers and the mothers who brought us into the world; and finally, we take care to include the Clerk of the Court, for if he befriend us, there is no crime which he will not find means to reduce to a slight fault, and no fault which he cannot prevent from being punished. For all these our brotherhood causes the *sanctimonies* (ceremonies) I have named to be *solecised* (solemnised) every year with all possible *grandiloquence*."[1]

The laws of the community are then explained to them, and the pupils are found so promising that Monipodio promises them "half-a-dozen lessons," to perfect them; "and I then trust in God," he adds devoutly, "that you will turn famous craftsmen, or even masters." The thieves and the bravos then enter upon their business. A devout old woman, who has been waiting her turn, announces to Monipodio that a basket of fine

[1] We quote from the translation of Mr Kelly, which is tolerably accurate.

linen had been brought to her house by two of the fraternity, who were so hot in pursuit of a cattle-dealer who had just been paid for his cattle, that they had not time to count the linen; "but they relied," she says, "on the rectitude of my conscience." "I must be at Our Lady of the Waters before mid-day strikes," adds this old lady, "having to accomplish my devotions and offer my candles there, as well as at the crucifix of St Augustin;" and she asks "a few maravedis to buy candles for her offerings" from some young women of the most degraded kind who have made their appearance, and who give her their contributions with great readiness. Then the bravos have to give an account of themselves. One has had a commission to accomplish "a knife-slash of fourteen stitches," the cut being estimated by the number of stitches necessary to sew it up. The gentleman who has given this commission complains that it was administered to the lackey of the person for whom he had ordered it. "Well, well," admitted Chiquiquoque, "seeing that I could not find room for the number of stitches I had to make, because of the narrowness and want of space in the visage of the merchant, I gave the cut to a lackey he had with him, that I might not lose my journey." "If your worship would like to have another cut given to the master," Monipodio obligingly suggests, "of as many stitches as the space can contain——?" And this bargain is eventually made; the list "of the cuts to be given this week" is then read over; and various robberies arranged with much business-like care; the rest of the company meantime eating, drinking, quarrelling, and making up their quarrels. Business is very slack with

the bravos, however, for, as Monipodio explains, "There is not a leaf on the tree that moves without the will of God, and we cannot force people to avenge themselves whether they will or no."

The "Jealous Estremaduran" is a very different kind of tale. It is the story of an old Spaniard, Carriazales, much experienced in the world and its wickedness, who, coming back from the Indies with a fortune, marries at nearly seventy a young wife. Learned in all the wiles of enterprising gallants, he resolves that his wife at least shall be safe; and to this end he makes a fortress of his house, veiling its windows so that nothing can be seen from them but the sky, raising the parapets round the flat roof for the same purpose, and making the most elaborate provisions for the supply of the house by a turning-box, without admitting any tradesmen from without, while at the same time he furnishes the house with the greatest luxury within. But when were ever such precautions taken for any good? Leonora, the young wife, being but a child, takes all this with great simplicity, but her duenna and attendants are deeply indignant at the thraldom in which they are kept; and a bold youth—the unfailing *galan* of Spanish romance—by means of great pains and cunning, manages at last to seduce the porter, an old negro, and obtain an entry. He offers to teach the porter to sing, and charms him with his own musical gifts, till the negro in his enthusiasm, through the turning-box, informs the maids of his teacher, who is the finest musician in the world, and arranges with the women that they are to come down at a certain hour in the evening to hear the music through

this, the only aperture in the house. They are delighted with the novelty of the intrigue, the opening of communication with the world, as well as the music, and on the next evening persuade the poor little wife to accompany them. Then the *galan*, on the other side of the turning-box, proposes that Carriazales's wine should be drugged, an impression taken of the master-key, and himself admitted to play and sing to the full contentment of the women while the old man sleeps. Leonora demurs to this, and is alarmed by the idea; but pacified by the stranger's promise to obey in everything, and be on his very best behaviour, she consents at last. The poor old husband is sent to sleep with a potion administered to him, and the young man enters, to the delight of the imprisoned household. He sings to them while they dance, and becomes the centre of a very carnival of amusement, in the midst of which the gallant and the duenna are the only two who entertain any evil thoughts. Cervantes, like all other writers of his time and nation, finds nothing too bad to say of the duenna. "O *dueñas*," he cries, "born for the perdition of thousands of modest, virtuous beings! O ye long-plaited coifs, chosen to impart an air of grave decorum to the chambers of noble ladies, how often do ye reverse the functions of your office!" The young man at last, by the arts of this false guardian, is left alone with the reluctant, alarmed Leonora; and poor old Carriazales, waking at that moment, groping dismayed through the house, and at last finding his wife in the duenna's room in this company, has every reason to think himself betrayed.

So far the story has not been unlike many others:

but the conclusion carries us into a world of far higher sentiment and meaning. The old man steals back to his desecrated chamber, and there falls into a swoon, from which the return of his wife arouses him. He bids her send for her parents, as he feels he has but a short time to live. Leonora, alarmed, overwhelms him with anxious questions and remorseful caresses; but he gazes at her with a look of astonishment, and answers nothing. The doors are all left open, the servants are fluttering with alarm, but no one knows that the old man has discovered anything. When the parents of poor Leonora arrive, he makes them a long and solemn address. He repeats to them all the precautions he has taken to keep his wife his own,—then tells them what he had that morning discovered. And then comes his revenge. He has sent for a notary to make his will, doubles Leonora's jointure, and recommends her to marry after his death the young man whom she must doubtless love. The poor girl protests that she has not offended him except in thought, and that it is his life, not his death, that she desires, but is interrupted by a fainting-fit, and never completes her explanation; and though they all weep together and embrace each other, she is not cleared from the stigma upon her, but lets the old husband die deceived. Meanwhile the gallant is full of hopeful anticipation. But Leonora's momentary levity has been too tragically punished for any return, and within a week after her husband's death she becomes a nun. "For myself," says Cervantes, "I was long possessed with a desire to complete this story. . . . Only I know not why it was that Leonora did not persist in exculpating herself, and explaining to her jealous husband how guilt-

less she had been in the whole of that unhappy business. But her extreme agitation paralysed her tongue at the moment, and the haste which her husband made to die left her without another opportunity to complete her justification." Thus the tale of those useless bolts and bars, the house made into a jail, the poor young innocent wife into a prisoner, and all the usual paraphernalia of intrigue, strikes suddenly another note, and we end by sincere pity for the old curmudgeon, and an almost painful sympathy with the unfortunate girl who is treated so leniently yet so cruelly.

In several of the other tales the reader will find a great deal of the characteristic wisdom and insight into human life, mingled with a keen perception of its shrewd folly and sharp-cornered individuality, of which Cervantes shows so many examples in 'Don Quixote.' One or two of them are made up of keen remarks upon the life and action round him, with scarcely a thread of story to string them upon. Such are the "Dialogue of the Two Dogs" and the tale of the "Licentiate Vidriera." The latter personage, a fine scholar and philosopher, is poisoned by a love-philtre which brings him to the verge of death, and leaves him with a mania of a curious description. He thinks when he rises from his sick-bed that he has become a man of glass, and his life is henceforward full of elaborate precautions to keep himself from being broken. But while he goes about gingerly in a wadded wrapper carefully adapted to his supposed condition, and invents an apparatus by which food is to be conveyed to him without any personal contact on the part of those who serve him, he yet retains all his old learning and wisdom, and a Socratic force of argument. In this condi-

tion he shows all classes their imperfections, and convicts them out of their own mouths, while at the same time perfectly conscious of his personal delusion—a bold and strange sarcasm and reflection upon human weakness. The recovery of his complete reason, however, does more harm than good to the poor Licentiate, who is mobbed when he appears in the ordinary costume of a doctor, giving up the shapeless wrapper in which he had been wont to enfold himself, and at which in its day the boys had thrown stones. "He finally resolved to go to Flanders, there to support himself by the strength of his arm, since he could no longer profit by that of his intellect, exclaiming, as he departed," says Cervantes, with no doubt some reflection of a bitterness of his own, "O city and Court, you by which the expectations of the bold pretender are fulfilled, while the hopes of the modest labourer are destroyed, you who abundantly sustain the shameless buffoon, while the worthy sage is left to die of hunger, I bid ye farewell!"

It would be difficult to find a more powerful and subtle study of the mingled folly and wisdom, the clear-sightedness and blindness, of mankind, than exists in this strange philosophical sketch. The man who is full of insight into others, and into the devices of his own crazed fancy, yet quite unable to restrain them; and the populace who follow him with enthusiasm in his eccentricity but stone him when he is cured, are almost too profound for the perception of the hasty reader.

The "Dialogue of the Two Dogs" is full of the same kind of keen observation and serious but not bitter criticism. The dog Berganza relates his experiences to his friend Scipio, lying on the mat outside a door in the hospital,

and overheard by the patient within. The dog, in his honest soul, looks upon the cheats that are current among men, more as curiosities than as crimes. He is first the dog of a butcher, and sees how the rough fellows in the shambles take tithe of the meat, sending the best pieces to their mistresses and friends, and cheating their employers; how the shepherds raise a great alarm of a wolf, and send their dogs scouring the country to chase away the supposed ravager of their flocks, but in the meantime kill and half devour the victim, whose loss is set down to a wolf who has never been seen near them,—with many other discoveries of the same kind. Here are his shrewd remarks upon these same shepherds, which come with amusing force from the author of "Galatea." The dog is much surprised to find how different his masters are from those of whom he has heard people read in "certain books—all treating of shepherds and shepherdesses, and how they passed their whole life in singing and playing on pipes and rebecks, and other old-fashioned instruments." "I remember how the shepherd of Aupico sang the praises of the peerless Belisarda, and that there was not a tree on all the mountains of Arcadia under whose trunk he had not sat and sung, from the moment Sol quitted the arms of Aurora till he threw himself into those of Thetis. . . . I did not forget the shepherd Elicio, more enamoured than bold; . . . nor the great shepherd Filida; nor the anguish of Séreno and the remorse of Diana, with many other tales of the same sort." But of all this enchanted company, he found nothing among the true shepherds whose life he shared. "The habits and occupations of my masters, and the rest of the shepherds in that quarter, were very different from those of the

shepherds in the books. If mine sang, it was no tuneful and finely composed strains, but very rude and vulgar songs, to the accompaniment, not of pipes and rebecks, but to that of two crooks knocked against each other, or of bits of tile jingled between the fingers, and sung, with voices not melodious and tender, but so coarse and out of tune that, whether singly or in chorus, they seemed to be howling or grunting. . . . This led me to conclude that all these books about pastoral life are only fictions, ingeniously written for the amusement of the idle, and that there is not a word of truth in them."

To simplify this account of the novels of Cervantes, we may add here a brief description of the two which are inserted in 'Don Quixôte,'—the story of the "Captive" and that of the "Curioso Impertinente," translated by Shelton the "Curious Impertinent," and by others, more correctly, the "Impertinent or Indiscreet Curiosity." The first of these has been referred to on several previous occasions. It is the same tale which had already formed the plot of the "Baños de Argel," and which is also, to some degree, employed in the story of the "Generous Lover," another of the Exemplary Novels. It is a story of the captivity in Africa, not that of Cervantes himself, but yet constructed, in all its details, as only an eyewitness could have framed it, and full, even in its romantic improbability, of life and truth to nature. Whether there was any foundation of fact in the incident, so often repeated—the devotion of a Moorish lady, partially converted to Christianity by a captive nurse, to the Spanish *caballero*, to whom she furnished the means of buying his ransom and making his escape, on condition that he made her the companion of his flight—we are not told;

but either some such tradition existed among the Algerian captives, or it was a favourite fancy with Cervantes. In the "Baños de Argel" we leave the beautiful Zara, who has done all this for her lover, on the eve of entering the vessel which is to convey her to Spain; but in the "Captive" we find her, a little amplified and developed, under the name of Zoraide, in Spain itself, deeply veiled, in the most modest seclusion, and waited upon with reverential devotion by the Captive whom she has delivered, until, on finding his relatives and means of subsistence, he can fulfil the engagements he has entered into in Algiers, by baptising and marrying the lady who has put so much trust in him.

The story of the "Indiscreet Curiosity" is very different from this oft-repeated narrative of the Spanish cavalier's adventures among the Paynims. It is of the class to which belongs the "Jealous Estremaduran,"—a species of composition in which the old conventional lines of intrigue are woven through such a web of human passion, that the usual confusion of mind and meaning contained in them is strangely intensified, and drawn out of the set fashion of this kind of manufacture into a tragical clearness and depth, such as contrast strangely with the easy fabric of the other tales. The victim, once more, is an unhappy husband, but he is the author of his own misery. Anselmo and Lothario are two friends entirely devoted to each other, and known by all their city, which is Florence, as an example of the completest brotherhood. When Anselmo marries, Lothario, out of discretion, withdraws from his society, not, as happens in modern life, lest he should find himself an intruder between two people still more closely bound together than any friends can be, but lest

he should injure the reputation of the young wife by intercourse too unrestrained to suit the ideas of the time. Anselmo, distressed by this withdrawal, entreats his friend to return to their old terms of close intimacy, and, at the same time, discloses to him a trouble which oppresses his mind—one of the most fantastic revulsions of too much happiness which it is possible to conceive. "The desire which vexeth me," he says (we quote from Shelton's translation), "is a longing to know whether my wife Camilla be as good and perfect as I do account her; and I cannot rest wholly satisfied of this truth but by making trial of her, in such sort as may give manifest argument of the degree of her goodness, as the fire doth show the value of gold. For I am of opinion, O friend, that a woman is of no more worth or virtue than that which is in her after she hath been solicited, and that she alone is strong who cannot be bowed by the promises, gifts, tears, and continued importunities of importunate lovers." This is the office with which he wishes to charge his friend, adjuring him to come constantly to the house, and to do the very thing which Lothario in his discretion had been afraid vulgar slanderers might accuse him of doing—pay court to his friend's wife. Lothario resists, and protests with all his might; but finding his friend is not to be satisfied otherwise, finally pretends to accept the dangerous commission. The foolish husband contrives means to leave them alone together, and is for some time persuaded that Lothario is acting on his evil instructions; but discovering that his friend has indeed said not a word, and has only been answering him with pretences, calls him to account, and urging the fulfilment of his promise, goes away for some

time, leaving Lothario in the position of master of the house in his absence, much to the vexation and distress of his wife, who protests in vain against the substitution. Now comes the moment of real harm. Lothario, thus cast into the constant company of an amiable and beautiful woman, begins, in spite of himself, to notice and admire her fine qualities and gentle ways; and before the period of Anselmo's absence has expired, is so moved out of himself as to do in reality what he had promised to do in pretence, and offers love to his friend's wife. Camilla, in dismay and horror, leaves him without a word, and rushing to her chamber, sends her husband a letter, imploring him to return instantly, or she will herself return to her father's house. But the foolish husband is delighted by this symptom of agitation, and sends her a message that he will come back soon, and that she is by no means to go away. By this means he procures at last the downfall of both wife and friend; for Camilla's constancy gradually yields to the temptations which have overcome Lothario. When he returns, they receive him with deceitful pretences of indifference, and Lothario assures him that Camilla is the most perfect of women, and has resisted all his advances. For a time the deceit goes on; and even when Lothario, moved to sudden jealousy, half reveals it, his self-betrayal is neutralised by a cunning contrivance of the grievously changed Camilla. At length, however, discovery comes; and waking one morning in a little alarm because of something a maid has told him, the foolish husband finds his wife and his friend gone, his house desolate, and his honour stained irretrievably. Cervantes, after many long preliminary speeches, takes but a page to relate the

condition of the deceived and injured husband, who owes his ruin to his own folly, and can find no comfort in earth or heaven. When he comes back to his house, after he has found Lothario, to whom he runs half dressed to tell the news of Camilla's flight, fled also, the picture of desolate misery is complete. "He returned to his own house, wherein he found no creature, man or woman; for all his folk were departed, and had left the house alone and desert." Then he wanders out through the country roads to the house of a friend in a village near, hearing by chance on the way the news of his own misfortune from a passer-by, and reaching his destination, dies of the trouble he has brought upon himself. Lothario is killed shortly after in battle, and the unhappy Camilla becomes a nun, but lives only a short time. Thus summarily the story ends. Once more, as in the case of Carriazales, though without the purity which gives pathos to that conclusion, the well-worn subject turns into a tragedy, not so much of gross and fleshly passion, as of that endless human blundering and piteous folly which, being so much closer to every man's experience, gives to the sympathetic reader a still keener pang.

The "Exemplary Novels" with which we have classed this strange and painful story are almost the only works produced by Cervantes which are worthy the author of 'Don Quixote.' They are full of his characteristic wisdom and humour, with wonderful panoramic effects of Spanish scenery and manners, and the teeming life of his century, to form a background for the delicate romantic figures of his errant demoiselles and cavaliers, as well as for the burlier beings who give the chief value to his pages. Old Spain herself at the height of her

glory, just on the verge of decay, with all the echoes of wars around her, and all the stirring disorder of her existence within, — with the gipsies dancing in the streets, while noble ladies and gentlemen look on in gilded balconies, and shrewd observers make their commentaries from the wayside—the tinkle of a guitar rising here and there, and a new song of the oldest conventional strain, appropriate to the moment; with all the amusing encounters by the way, the learned-foolish tattle of bachelors and doctors, the homely sense and greed of the peasant, the stir of the inns, the somewhat grim domestic seclusion of the houses with their barred windows and invariable duennas, the women herding together—the men, save for their encounters of gallantry, leading their lives apart;—all rise before us as we read. The plots and incidents are of the well-worn romantic type, importations from Italy, such as every other national literature has made in its day; but the life, the surroundings, every accessory and accompaniment of the tale, recommends itself as genuine: the breath of real existence is through all.

It is perhaps necessary to say a word about the "Tia Fingida," or "Pretended Aunt," the story which commentators have gloated over as the one thing forbidden and illicit which can be attributed to Cervantes. It is a sketch of the appearance in Salamanca of a young adventuress, accompanied by a personage elaborately got up to represent a venerable lady of rank, and calling herself the aunt of the girl whose beauty she is in reality trading upon. Her counsels to her pupil, and the composition of the meretricious household, as discovered and overheard by a rich but not very scrupulous *galan*, who gets

himself introduced secretly into the house by the treachery of the always treacherous duenna, are the subjects of the sketch, which, however, is not outwardly indecent or licentious, and might be gone through by an innocent reader without any clear understanding as to what trade it was for which these very business-like instructions are being given. The appearance of the party in the streets is minutely described, and presents an admirable caricature of the *cortège* and aspect of a fine lady of the time:—

"They saw coming up the street a venerable matron with wimple white as snow, larger than the surplice of a Portuguese canon, and plaited over her forehead; her fan in her hand; a great rosary round her neck, and reaching to her middle with rattling beads; a mantle of silk and wool; new white gloves without a crease; and a silver-mounted walking-stick of Indian cane. On her left side, and leading her by the hand, walked her esquire, who looked a contemporary of the Conde Fernan Gonzalez, with his wide coat, once fleecy but now napless; his scarlet breeches, antique half-boots, robe-cloak, Milan bonnet, and needle-worked skull-cap, because he was subject to giddiness; his fur gloves, shoulder-belt, and Navarrese sword. In front walked the niece, a girl of eighteen apparently, with a composed and grave face, rather oval than round, large black eyes of an affectedly sleepy expression, finely-marked eyebrows, long eyelashes, a brilliant complexion, auburn hair, curled by art, and clustering over the temples. She was dressed in a saya of fine woollen cloth, a close-fitting plush gown, overshoes of black velvet, with tacks and borders of polished silver, and gloves perfumed with ambergris. Two duennas, dressed in a style corresponding to that of the esquire, closed the rear. In this stately manner the good lady arrived at her house."

To see such picturesque groups step along the old stately yet narrow streets, the students watching, each

with his portfolio (*vade-mecum*, which was the name by which these young blades were called) under his arm, and all the keen lookers-on discussing the new-comers, is better than a picture. The old lady is a lay nun, a *beata*, some say; while the knowing laugh and settle her real character without any hesitation. Thus the "Tia Fingida" adds its scene to the overflowing and picturesque, if far from pure or elevated, life of the Spanish cities. In his later days Cervantes himself was in trouble on account of the murder of a gallant under his windows, whose visits to one of the inmates of the much-divided and many-storeyed Spanish house had cost him his life. The poor writer had a household of women—a young daughter and niece, and a devout *beata*, being members of his family—and how could the alguazils tell whether the girls in the house of the poverty-stricken gentleman, who wrote letters for every client that came to him, as well as such extraneous matter as a 'Don Quixote,' might not be the culprits? He had this humiliation to bear, as well as many other humiliations, and was put in prison with all his family till the matter could be examined and their innocence proved.

CHAPTER VI.

'DON QUIXOTE.'

Of all the works which we have attempted to place in rapid review before the reader, not one had been printed except his first effort, the "Galatea," when Cervantes, after his disappearance from all the records, suddenly comes back again to our vision in the year 1603, in the city of Valladolid. "There is at Valladolid," says M. Chasles, "a poor little house, narrow and low, enclosed among the little taverns of a suburb near the course of a dried-up brook. It is here that Cervantes, at the age of fifty-seven, established himself. I have visited, with an emotion of which I can give no description, this little dwelling, undistinguished even by a stone or an inscription. A worn stair leads to the two modest rooms once occupied by Cervantes. The one which was no doubt his sleeping-room is square with a low roof and uncovered rafters; the other, a kind of sombre kitchen, looking out upon the roofs of the neighbouring houses, contains still his *cantarelo*—that is, a stone hollowed out[1] with round holes, where the pitchers of water are placed. With him here lived his wife

[1] In plain and homely English, a *sink*.

Donna Catalina, his daughter Isabel, a young woman of twenty, his sister Donna Andrea, his niece Costanza, and a relation called Magdalena. To all this tribe was added a maid, the servant-of-all-work. Where were they all lodged? At all events they worked together. The women earned their bread by embroidering Court dresses. Valladolid, adopted as his residence by the new king, and by the Duke of Lerma, was then overflowing, as was Versailles at a later period, by noble hangers-on, by grandees of Spain, and by generals. The poor family lived by all this show. The Marquis de Villafranca, on his return from Algiers to the Court, employed the family of the soldier-poet, with whom he was acquainted, to make his gala suit. Cervantes occupied himself in keeping the accounts of the workwomen, in regulating the affairs of various employers, and in terminating the long lawsuit carried on against him by the Court of Finance. In the evening, while the needles of the women flew through the rich stuffs, he took his pen, and, seated at a corner of the table, wrote down his thoughts."

It was thus in the full ripeness of maturity that Cervantes completed the first part of the great work of his life. He had begun it in prison, in Seville, during a short confinement, or in Argamasilla during a long one, no one can tell—at least, during those obscure years to which we have no clue. It must have been finished, or nearly finished, when he reappears at Valladolid. It is not necessary to delay the reader by telling what decision the world has come to about the book. He had been nothing more than an unsuccessful dramatic author hitherto, with little acceptance on the stage, and his "Galatea," his only printed work, does not seem to have

met with much success; but there was no doubt or hesitation in the public mind as to 'Don Quixote.' It was greeted everywhere with acclamations of joyous enthusiasm. In the year of its publication, "three, if not four," says Pellicer—"four at least," says Navarrete—editions were brought out,—two in Madrid, the others in Valencia and Lisbon,—the best of all proofs of its immediate appreciation. Another of Cervantes's biographers relates the following anecdote in proof of the universal popularity among all classes of the wonderful book, which was a kind of mirror of Spain to herself: "Philip being in the balcony of his palace at Madrid, looking out, saw a student at the corner of the street reading a book, who continually stopped reading to strike himself on the forehead and to give vent to bursts of laughter. 'That student,' said the king, 'is either out of his mind, or he is reading "Don Quixote,"'"—which latter supposition turned out to be the case. Thus, from the king himself to the lowest rank of reader, the work flew all over the country, and in a very short time was translated into English, French, and Italian. Its success was beyond doubt. Its object has been discussed from that time to this, without any conclusion on the part of the critics. Some have received it simply as a great satire upon the romances of chivalry which were universally read at the time, and to which it certainly gave the death-blow,—a purpose which may easily be admitted, as it lies on the surface of the work, notwithstanding the laughing tenderness with which Cervantes, even in assailing them, speaks of these books, and compunctiously excepts and puts aside from his general condemnation most of his own favourites —a long list. Some, on the other hand, consider it a

political satire, and identify the Knight of La Mancha with Charles V. or with other historical personages. The question is interesting to historians and scholars, and engages many busy and curious minds; but the true reader — that modest and genial personage who, happily for poets, takes most works on their own showing, and does not trouble his mind about ulterior meanings—has received and will receive Don Quixote for himself. We know a great deal more of him in these days than we do of Amadis of Gaul—we care a great deal more for him than for Charles V. We find far less and far more in him than any critic bids us. The folly of those wild unreasoning raids in search of adventure; the sad absurdity of those assaults upon one knows not what; the confusion of high-flown imagination, in which windmills pass for giants, and galley-slaves for innocent captives to be liberated,—are better known to our inmost consciousness than either Spain or chivalry. Ordinarily our disappointments, our sense of having made ourselves ridiculous, our bewildering consciousness that our best intended enterprises and boldest efforts for the good of others have turned out the most foolish, if not the most mischievous, parts of our life, find vent in bitterness, not in laughter. Many such enterprises had Cervantes undertaken in his day. What fame he had hoped for, what good he had been confident of, what advantage to Spain and to humanity he had intended! And it had all come to nothing. Here he was in Valladolid penniless, scarcely known, having worked no revolution in the world; the Turk just as strong as ever, notwithstanding all the passionate assaults upon him of that Spaniard; Spain just as indifferent as ever, nothing

altered; and himself, with his bright keen eyes, for fifty years and more observant of everything, consulted by nobody, his opinion not worth more than that of the merest fop who came to Donna Catalina for his embroidery — sitting among the busy women, scribbling what perhaps they thought in their hearts were idle stories, at a corner of the table heaped with gold thread and many-coloured silks. And yet he has the heart, with his cheerful sunshiny genius, to turn it all into laughter—no plaint of injury in his mouth, no thought of neglect, not even a sigh for the dear follies which he would do again, be sure, had he the power—generously unteachable, though seeing so well the ridicule of it all. This is, in our opinion, the secret of 'Don Quixote.' Looking back, Cervantes saw what absurdity it was to have imagined that one poor lance was to overturn the powers of this world! what foolish conceit even there was in his solemn certainty that he could do it,—source of inextinguishable laughter! after all that his armour was but paper, his helmet not much more than a barber's basin, his fine Pegasus of imagination a Rozinante, shaky old horse of mournful aspect, fit for little more than the dogs! He sees it all from the corner of the work-table at Valladolid, and not having it in him to weep, and upset the women, and make their lives miserable, but rather to put a cheery face upon all things, and keep their hearts up, laughs—laughs, thank heaven for him, with such irresistible and genuine laughter, so large, so honest, so innocent and from the heart, that all the world laughs too; but yet does not see any better than before, dull cynic that it is, what infinite sufferance, what noble patience, what a childlike friendly nature lies under that mirth!

To give the reader an account of such a book as this is not an easy task in the limited space at our command. The quotations we are able to make can be but few, but this matters the less as there are several satisfactory translations within reach; and to those but slightly acquainted with this classic history they will be sufficient, we hope, so far to increase the interest in the book and its construction, that the abridgments which are so common everywhere will no longer content them. These abridgments, containing merely the more ludicrous incidents of the first part, give a very undignified and inadequate idea of Don Quixote, degrading him often, especially in the minds of children, to the level of Baron Munchausen and other foolish heroes.

Don Quixote is introduced to the reader as follows—we quote from Shelton, as we have before said, the antiquity of his translation giving it a flavour of the original not possessed by the others:—

"There lived not long since in a certain village of La Mancha, the name whereof I purposely omit, a gentleman of their calling that löve to pile up in their halls old launces, halberds, morrions, and such other armours and weapons. He was besides master of an ancient target, a lean stallion, and a greyhound. His pot consisted daily of more beefe than mutton, a galli-mawfry[1] each night, collops and eggs on Saturday, lentils on Fridays, with a pigeon added for Sunday; did consume three parts of his rents; the rest and remnant thereof was spent on a jerkin of fine cloth, a paire of velvet hose, with pantofles of the same for the holydayes, and one suit of the finest homespun, for therewith he honoured and set his person on the work-dayes. He had in his house a woman-servant of some forty years old, and a niece

[1] Minced meat.

not yet twenty, and a man that served him both in field and at home, and could saddle his horse, and likewise manage a pruning-hook. The master himself was about forty years old, of a strong complexion, dry flesh, and a withered face. He was an early riser, and a great lover of hunting. . . . You shall therefore wit that this gentleman above named, the spirts that he was idle (which was the larger part of the yeere) did apply himself wholly to the reading of bookes of knighthood, and that with such gusts and delights, as he almost wholly neglected the exercise of hunting, yea, and the very administration of his household affairs; and his curiosity and folly came to that passe that he made away many acres of arable land to buy him books of that kind. . . . Finally, his wit being wholly extinguished, he fell into one of the strangest conceits that ever madman stumbled on in this world: to wit, it seemed to him very requisite and behooveful, as well for the augmentation of his honours, as also for the benefite of the commonwealth, that he himselfe should become a knight-errant, and goe throughout the world, with his horse and armour, to seek adventures, and practise in person all that he had read was used by knights of yore: revenging of all kinds of injuries, and offering himself to occasions and dangers; which, once happily achieved, might gaine him eternal renowne. The poore soule did already figure himself crowned, through the valour of his arme, at least Emperor of Trapesonda; and ledde thus by these soothing thoughts, and borne away by the exceeding delight he found in them, he hastened all that he might to effect his urging desires."

His arrangements to carry out this purpose were as follows:—

"And first of all, he caused certain rusty old armes to be scoured that belonged to his great-grandfather, and lay many ages neglected and forgotten in a by-corner of his house: he trimmed them and dressed them the best he mought, and then perceived a great defect they had; for they wanted a

helmet, and had only a plain morrion : but he by his industry supplied that want, and framed with certain papers pasted together a beaver for his morrion. True it is that to make tryall whether his pasted beaver was strong enough and might abide the adventure of a blow, he out with his sword and gave it a blow or two, and with the very first did quite undoe his whole weeke's labour : the facility wherewithall it was dissolved liked him nothing ; wherefor to assure himselfe better the next time from the like danger, he made it anew, placing certain yron barres within it in so artificial manner as he rested at once satisfied, both with his intention, and also the solidity of his worke ; and without making a second tryall he respected and held it in estimation of a most excellent beaver. Then did he presently visit his horse, who, though he had more angles than there are pence in a sixpence, through leanenesse, and more faults than Gonella's, having nothing on him but skin and bone, yet he thought that neither Alexander's Bucephalus, nor the Cid his horse Babieca, were in any respect equal to him. He spent foure days in devising him a name ; for, as he reasoned to himself, it was not fit that so famous a knight's horse, and chiefly being so good a beast, should want a known name : and therefore he endeavoured to give him such a one as should both declare what sometime he had been before he pertained to a knight-errant, and also what at present he was ; for it stood greatly with reason, seeing his lord and master had changed his estate and vocation, that he should alter likewise his denomination, and get a new one that was famous and altisonant, as becommed the new order and exercise which he now professed : and therefore, after many other names which he framed, blotted out, rejected, added, undid, and turned to frame again in his memory and imagination, he finally concluded to name him Rozinante,[1] a name in his opinion lofty, full, and significant of what he had been when

[1] "A horse of labour or carriage in Spanish is called a *rozin*, and the word *ante* signifies before,—so that Rozinante is a horse that sometime was of carriage."—*Shelton's note.*

a plaine jade, before he was exalted to his new dignity, being as he thought the best carriage-beast in the world. The name being thus given to his horse, and so to his mind, he resolved to give himselfe a name also, and in conclusion called himselfe Don Quixote."

There was but one other necessary with which he had to provide himself, and that was supplied in the following way :—

"His armour being scoured, his morrion transformed into a helmet, his horse named, and he himselfe confirmed with a new name also, he forthwith bethought himself that now he wanted nothing but a lady, on whom he might bestow his service and affection ; for the knight-errant that is lovelesse, resembles a tree that wants leaves and fruit, or a body without a soule : and therefore he was wont to say, 'If I should for my sins, or by good hap, encounter there abroad with some gyant (as knights-errant doe ordinarily), and that I should overthrow him with one blow to the ground, or cut him with a stroke in two halves, or finally overcome and make him yield to me, would it not be very expedient to have some lady to whom I might present him? And that he, entering in her presence, do kneele before my sweete lady, and say unto her with a humble and submissive voyce, —Madame, I am the gyant Caraculiambro, lord of the iland called Malindrania, whom the never-too-much-praysed knight Don Quixote de la Mancha has overcome in single combat, and hath commanded to present myselfe to your greatenesse, that it may please your Highness to dispose of me according unto your liking.' Oh how glad was our knight when he had made this discourse to himselfe, but chiefly when he had found out one whom he might call his lady! For as it is imagined, there dwelled in the next village unto his manor a young handsome wench with whom he was sometime in love, although, as is understood, she never knew or tooke notice thereof. She was called Aldonsa Lorenso; and her he thought fittest to intitle with the name

of lady of his thoughts; and searching a name for her that should not vary much from her owne, and yet should draw aneare somewhat to that of a princess or great lady, he called her Dulcinea del Toboso (for there she was born), a name in his conceit harmonious, strange, and significant, like to all the others that he had given to his things."

Thus completely equipped with everything necessary to the profession of a knight-errant, Don Quixote sallies forth "marvellous jocund and content to see with what facilitie he had commenced his good desires." But before long a terrible thought daunted him. To what end set forth in pursuit of adventures when he was not yet dubbed knight, and therefore was unauthorised to undertake any knightly enterprise? This staggered him greatly; yet he went on, resolving to remedy the omission as soon as might be, and left his horse to take which way he pleased, this being the correct manner in which a knight-errant should begin his journey. After a long day's travel he arrives in the twilight, worn-out and dusty, at a wayside inn, where some women are standing at the door. The adventurer immediately concludes in his distracted mind that this is "a castle with foure turrets, whereof the pinnacles were of glistening silver, without omitting the drawbridge, deepe fosse, and other adherents belonging to the like places," and that the women at the door are "two beautiful damzells or lovely ladies" taking the air before the castle-gates. The women receive his stately salutations with laughter; but that does not prevent him from immediately opening the subject which distresses his mind to the innkeeper when he appears, begging of him as lord of the castle to confer knighthood upon him.

At the second repetition of this extraordinary desire, the innkeeper (shrewd and knowing as these functionaries are in La Mancha) humours his guest, and prescribes to him with great gravity the ceremonies necessary. The chapel of the castle being out of repair, he suggests that Don Quixote should watch his arms in the courtyard, which he does accordingly, to the great amusement of the household. One of the carriers, however, who are lodging in the inn, coming out to water his mules, and approaching the spot where this solemn figure is marching up and down, lance in hand, his arms laid out in the horse-trough, lays profane hands upon them. Don Quixote has been seen, sometimes pacing to and fro tranquilly, at others leaning on his lance contemplating his armour, by all the laughing household from the windows, — it being now full night, "but with such clearnesse of the moone, as it might well compare with his brightness that lent her her splendour." When, however, the carrier, coming out into the moonlight, lays sacrilegious hands upon the armour, the gentle knight is roused. He makes an appeal to his lady after the most approved mode of knighthood, and "lifting up his lance with both hands, he paide the carrier so rounde a knocke therewithall on the pate as he overthrew him to the ground in so evill taking, that if he had seconded it with another, he should not have needed any surgeon to cure him." A second carrier sharing the same fate, and his comrades collecting to avenge him, the landlord interferes, and assures Don Quixote that his arms have been watched a sufficient length of time, and proceeds to the ceremonial of dubbing him knight, which is done by giving him a resounding blow with his own sword.

At the same time the knight-maker gives the neophyte very sensible advice, exhorting him henceforward to carry money with him—which he had thought unnecessary—as well as a change of linen. The new-made knight, "so content, lively, and jocund to behold himself knighted that his very horse-gyrts were ready to burst for joy," turns homeward to seek these "needments," and also with the intention of selecting a squire. On the way, however, to his great delight, his adventures begin. He finds a man beating a boy of fifteen, whom he has tied to a tree, and whom the knight immediately liberates, ordering his master to pay him instead what the boy declares is owing to him. The master promises very readily, and Don Quixote rides away in triumph; but, alas! no sooner is his back turned than the enraged master ties up his servant once more and whips him worse than ever. "In this manner the valorous Don Quixote redressed that wrong." But as he rode upon his way, "glad above measure for his success, accounting himself to have given a most noble beginning to his feats of arms, he comes up with a band of travellers, "certain merchants of Toledo going to Murcia to buy silks," "who rode with their Quitasoles, or shadowes of the sun," says old Shelton, to whom evidently the homely umbrella was a thing little known. (He describes it in a footnote as "a thing made like a canopy, used by travellers to keep away the sunne.") Into the midst of this party Don Quixote rides, calling upon them all to acknowledge the peerless beauty of Dulcinea del Toboso. The merchants parley, but one of their lackeys rushes in, and falling upon the unfortunate knight, bears him to the ground, and pommels him unmercifully. Encum-

bered with his armour, Don Quixote lies on the road till he is picked up by a peasant of his own village, who conveys him home, bruised and melancholy, upon his own ass, leading Rozinante. And thus his first adventure ends.

The next chapter is occupied by the scrutiny made by the curate and barber (barber-chirurgeon, be it remembered, a more elevated office than that now understood by the name) of the library of Don Quixote, held while he himself is groaning in bed, or waking to declare himself the paladin Reinaldo sorely handled by Roland, and overpowered by divers enchantments. The review of the books—some of which are pounced upon with delight by the curate, and some dismissed to the keeping of the barber, while the rest are thrown out of the window and burned by the anxious women—is full of humour. But our space prevents us from touching upon it. They then block up the door of the library, and inform the patient when he recovers that an enchanter descended one night upon a cloud and carried it and all its contents away. This explanation is received by Don Quixote with stately credence—as a thing quite natural and to be looked for. "He is a very wise enchanter, and my great adversary," says the deceived gentleman. He then begins to prepare—this time with more elaboration — for renewed adventures, providing himself with money according to the innkeeper's advice, and also with a squire, whom he finds in the person of Sancho Panza, the immortal companion of his wanderings. The following are some of the inducements used by the master to induce this delightful clown to follow his fortunes :—

"Don Quixote, among many other things, bad him to dispose himself willingly to depart with him, for now and then such an adventure might present itself that in as short a space as one could take up a couple of straws an island might be won, and he be left as governor thereof."

This argument touches the gain-loving peasant in the tenderest part, and he sets out accordingly, riding his ass "like a patriarch with his wallet and bottle" by the side of his master, as round and comfortable as the knight on his tall beast of skin and bone is lean and long. Don Quixote is somewhat concerned about the ass, and remains for some time "pensive, calling to mind whether ever he had read that any knight-errant carried his squire assishly mounted; but he could not remember any authority for it." He consoles himself, however, that there will soon arise an occasion to remedy this, "by dismounting the first discourteous knight they met, from his horse, and giving it to his squire." The pair set out by night, to conceal their departure from their families; and as the morning dawns and their hearts rise, they fall into talk:—

"Sancho Pança seeing the oportunity good, said to his master, 'I pray you have care, good Sir Knight, that you forget not that government of the island which you have promised mee, for I shall bee able to governe it were it never so great.' To which Don Quixote replied, 'You must understand, friend Sancho Pança, that it was a custome very much used by ancient knights-errant, to make their squires governours of the islands and kingdomes that they conquered, and I am resolved that so good a custome shall never be abolished by mee, but rather I will passe and exceed them therein: for they sometimes, as I take it, did for the greater part expect untill their squires waxed aged, and after they were cloyed with service, and had suffered many bad dayes and worse

nights, then did they bestow upon them some title of an earle, or at least of a marquesse of some valley or province, of more or lesse account. But if thou livest, and I withall, it may happen that I might conquer such a kingdome within six dayes, that hath other kingdomes adherent to it, which would fall out as just as it were cast in a mould for thy purpose, whom I would crowne presently king of one of them. And doe not account this to be any great matter, for things and chances doe happen to such knights-adventurers as I am, by so unexpected and wonderfull wayes and meanes, as I might give thee very easily a great deale more than I promised.' 'After that manner,' said Sancho Pança, 'If I were a king through some miracle of those you say, then should Joan Gutierez[1] my wife become a queene, and my children princes.' 'Who doubts of that?' said Don Quixote. 'That doe I,' replied Sancho Pança; 'for I am fully perswaded, that although God would raine kingdomes downe upon the earth, none of them would fit well on Mary Gutierez her head. For, sir, you must understand that shee's not worth a dodkin for a queene. To be a countesse would agree with her better: and yet I pray God shee be able to dis-charge that calling.' 'Commend thou the matter to God,' quoth Don Quixote, 'that He may give her that which is most convenient for her. But doe not thou abase thy minde so much as to content thyselfe with lesse then at least to be a vice-roy.' 'I will not, good sir,' quoth Sancho, 'especially feeling I have so worthy a lord and master as yourselfe, who knowes how to give mee all that may turne to my benefit, and that I shall be able to dis-charge in good sort.'"

They have scarcely concluded this conversation when Don Quixote utters a cry of satisfaction. "Thirty or forty monstrous giants" suddenly appear between them and the sky, whose spoils will not only make the knight

[1] These changes in the name of Sancho's wife are like the very obstinacy of carelessness: she turns out after all to be Teresa Panza, and neither Joan nor Mary.

and squire rich, but the extirpation of "so bad a seed" will be a service to God. "What giants?" cries Sancho Panza, who perceives clearly that these monstrous shapes are no more than peaceable windmills. But his master's ardour is not to be restrained when the mill-sails begin to turn with the wind. "Though thou movest more arms than the giant Briareus, thou shalt stoop to me," he cries; and "commending himself most devoutly to his Lady Dulcinea," he charges this strange enemy. But when the stroke of the moving sail shivers his lance and throws him down, horse and man, our knight, though bruised, is undiscouraged. He waves aside Sancho's representation that "they were none other than windmills" with an easy solution of the difficulty. No doubt the enchanter Freston, who carried off all his books, has likewise transformed the giants into windmills to frustrate him. "But yet," he adds, "all his bad arts shall not prevail against the goodness of my sword." "God grant it!" said Sancho, and helps him to rise. That night they spend under the trees, from one of which Don Quixote breaks a branch to replace his broken lance, after the example of Diego Perez, who tore an oak-branch from the tree, and did so much execution with it, "battered so many Moors," that he got the surname of *Machuca*. Here Don Quixote sleeps not, but spends the night thinking upon his Lady Dulcinea, after the approved mode of knight-errants; while Sancho snores peaceably by his side. In the afternoon of the next day another adventure occurs. Two Benedictine monks in their black gowns, mounted on mules as big and coarse as dromedaries, make their appearance upon the road, wearing "masks with spectacles

in them, to keep away the dust from their faces." After them comes a coach, with an escort on horseback, and two lackeys running by the side. The lackeys belong to the monks, or rather to their mules, and the second cavalcade is entirely independent of them; but our knight explains the party after his own fashion. "These two great blacke bulkes which appear thus are doubtless enchanters that steale or carry away perforce some princesse in that coach," he says; and after summoning them to surrender, he charges one — the other having run away—and dismounts him, the monk in alarm letting himself slide off his mule to escape this fiery and unprovoked assault. Sancho Panza approaches with great alacrity to search the fallen friar —a pleasant office in which he is stopped by the servants, who beat him soundly; while his master, approaching the coach, announces to the lady within that she is free from the enchanters, and that all he asks of her is, to present herself before the peerless lady Dulcinea, and recount to her the great deed of daring by which he has emancipated her. However, our knight-errant is here confronted by one of the lady's escort—a hot-headed Biscayan, who, sputtering bad Spanish, and catching a cushion out of the carriage for a shield, engages him in mortal combat.

Here some sudden caprice seizes the writer. Perhaps he had got as far as this when a break in his own wandering life made him throw his work aside, and turn from the knight-errant to some real Sancho Panza of the soil in arrears with his taxes, or trying to sell his oats to the Government at twice their value. At all events he breaks off abruptly in the midst of the conflict. "It is

to be deplored how, in this very point and time, the author of this history," he says, "leaves this battell depending, excusing himself that he could finde no more written of the actes of Don Quixote." Cervantes ends with an intimation that by great care and research, he the "second author," or editor of the original manuscript, has found the missing papers, and will shortly continue his narrative.

The second book opens accordingly with a whimsical narrative of the finding of these papers, which affords us a pleasant glimpse of Cervantes himself as he must have appeared many a day to contemporary eyes, bargaining for old books in the streets. We quote this from Motteux's translation, as more exact than Shelton's. We may note that the imaginary Cid Hamet Ben-engeli, here suddenly introduced, continues to be referred to at intervals during the remainder of the history, and that his name is supposed to be an anagram of that of Cervantes; but his introduction is of course a mere caprice of the author.

"One day being in the Alcana at Toledo, I saw a young lad offer to sell a parcel of old written papers to a shopkeeper. Now I, being apt to take up the least piece of written or printed paper that lies in my way, though it were in the middle of the street, could not forbear laying my hands on one of the manuscripts, to see what it was, and I found it to be written Arabic, which I could not read. This made me look about to see whether I could find e'er a Morisco that understood Spanish, to read it for me, and give me some account of it: nor was it very difficult to meet with an interpreter there; for had I wanted one for a better and more ancient tongue, that place would have infallibly sup-

plied me. It was my good fortune to find one immediately; and having informed him of my desire, he no sooner read some lines but he began to laugh. I asked him what he laughed at? 'At a certain remark here in the margin of the book,' said he. I prayed him to explain it; whereupon, still laughing, he did it in these words: 'This Dulcinea del Toboso, so often mentioned in this history, is said to have had the best hand at salting of pork of any woman in all La Mancha.' I was surprised when I heard him name Dulcinea del Toboso, and presently imagined that those old papers contained the history of Don Quixote. This made me press him to read the title of the book; which he did, turning it thus extemporary out of Arabic: The History of Don Quixote de la Mancha; written by Cid Hamet Ben-engeli, an Arabian Historiographer. I was so overjoyed when I heard the title, that I had much ado to conceal it; and presently taking the bargain out of the shopkeeper's hand, I agreed with the young man for the whole, and bought that for half a real which he might have sold me for twenty times as much, had he but guessed at the eagerness of his chapman. I immediately withdrew with my purchase to the cloister of the great church, taking the Moor with me; and desired him to translate me those papers that treated of Don Quixote without adding or omitting the least word, offering him any reasonable satisfaction. He asked me but two arrobas of raisins and two bushels of wheat, and promised me to do it faithfully with all expedition: in short, for the quicker despatch and the greater security, being unwilling to let such a lucky prize go out of my hands, I took the Moor to my own house, where in less than six weeks he finished the whole translation."

To resume: The battle ends in a victory for Don Quixote, who grants the Biscayan his life on the prayer of the lady in the carriage, and on the same condition that he should present himself before Dulcinea. Sancho then comes forward, and, kissing his master's hand, de-

sires that Don Quixote will bestow upon him immediately "the government of that island which in this terrible battell you have wonne;" but is consoled in the disappointment with which he hears that this adventure, and others of the kind, "are not adventures of islands, but rather of cross-roads, where nothing is gained but a broken head," or, as in this case, a wounded ear—with a renewal of the promise, if he has patience, of the governorship in question. We must not hope, however, to lead the reader in so leisurely a manner through all the wanderings and adventures of this delightful pair, in which the master's faculty of explanation, and inexhaustible resources in the shape of enchanters, magic, and adverse forces of all kinds, to interpret his disappointments, and the squire's steady faith and matter-of-fact reception of all the wonders that happen, have left so lively an impression upon the imagination of the world, that even those who have never opened the book understand the universal reference to it. "I devoutly beseech that the time may come of gaining that island," quoth Sancho, "which has cost me so dear; and after let me dye presently, and I care not." "I have already said to thee, Sancho," quoth his lord, "that thou shouldst not trouble thyself in any wise about this affaire: for if an island were wanting, we have the kingdom of Dinemarca or that of Sobradisa, which will come as fit for thy purpose as a ring to thy finger." Thus Romance, investing everything in mad adornments of fancy, and seeing the world only through its dreams, and sober Matter-of-fact, with the shrewdest eyes, yet credulous of all the chances of gain, and believing in any miracle that will enrich itself, trudge forth together, the one in his wild imagina-

tion, the other in his stolid faith, finding a most comfortable meeting-ground, and striking out between them such gleams of poetic comprehension and miscomprehension, and parables of homely and worldly wisdom, as have never been equalled.

The adventure among the goatherds which follows is a bit of a pastoral introduced into the tale, with all the rustic festivities and languishing shepherds natural to such productions; but we quote from it, in the midst of all the madness of the surrounding adventures, Don Quixote's account of his profession of knight-errantry, in answer to the question why he should travel armed through a peaceful country:—

"The profession of my exercise doth not license or permit me to do other: good dayes, cockering, and ease were invented for soft courtiers; but travel, unrest, and armes were only invented and made for those whom the world terms knights-errant, of which number I myselfe (though unworthy) am one, and the least of all." [Then after a list of the famous knights-errant that have preceded him in history from King Arthur downward, he continues:] "'This then, good sirs, is to be a knight-errant, and that which I have said is the order of chivalry: wherein, as I have already said, I (although a sinner) have made profession, and the same doe I professe that these knights professed, whom I have above mentioned, and therefore I travel thorow these solitudes and deserts, seeking adventures, with full resolution to offer mine own arme and person to the most dangerous that fortune shall present, in the aid of weake and needy persons.' . . . 'Methinks, Sir Knight'" (says his questioner), "'that you have profest one of the most austere professions in the world. And I doe constantly hold that even that of the Carthusians is not neere so straight.' 'It may be as straight as our profession,' quoth Don Quixote, 'but that it should be so necessary for the world, I am within the breadth of two fingers to call it in

doubt. For if we would speak a truth, the soldier that puts in execution his captaine's command doth no less than the very captaine that commands him. Hence I infer that religious men doe with all peace and quietness seeke of heaven the good of the earth; but soldiers and we knights doe put in execution that which they demand, defending it with the valour of our armes and files of our swords; not under any roofe, but under the wide heavens, made, as it were, in summer a marke to the insupportable sunne-beames, and in winter to the rage of withering frosts. So that we are the ministers of God on earth, and the armes with which He executes here His justice. And as the affairs of war and things thereunto pertaining cannot be put in execution without sweate, labour, and travail, it follows that those who profess warfare take questionless greater paine than those who in quiet, peace, and rest doe pray unto God that He will favour and assist those that neede it. I mean not, therefore, to affirm, nor doth it once passe through my thought, that the state of a knight-errant is as perfect as that of a retyred religious man; but only would infer, through that which I myselfe suffer, that it is doubtlessly more laborious, more battered, hungry, thirsty, miserable.'"

It is Cervantes's habit, when he has interrupted the broad farce of the earlier part of his history by any involuntary outburst of higher sentiment like this, to picture the amused company round looking on with secret laughter at this too plain revelation of Don Quixote's craze,—the traveller who is drawing the poor gentleman out regarding him with suppressed smiles, while the rougher spectators shake their sides in the background, and Sancho gapes with honest wonder and faith at the wonderful utterances of his master. Not a goatherd or a rough attendant at the inn but knows our knight is crack-brained, and watches him with roars of stifled laughter, though all the while he is talking in his lofty

humility over their heads, the noblest sentiments. The art, or perhaps we might call it artifice, with which the author thus forestalls the commonplace critic, while betraying his own nobler and higher soul to those who can understand it, is wonderfully subtle, though perhaps it shows on the part of Cervantes a little of that timidity and terror of the high-flown which a strong sense of humour almost invariably brings with it.

But when we have the pair on the road, jogging along, often groaning after the last encounter, but never dismayed,—Sancho with a homely word of proverbial wisdom for everything that happens, and one eye always upon his island, while his master has an exquisite reason for everything,—no such artifice is necessary; and no excuse is given for the occasional gleam of nobler fancy which comes from Don Quixote. We may, however, pass lightly over many adventures—even that which procures for the knight-errant one of the most remarkable parts of his martial array, the famous Mambrino's helmet, or barber's basin, which he wears ever after with so much complacency — until we come to the memorable incident of the galley-slaves. Many a curious sight have the knight and the squire encountered on that rural highway leading through the peaceful breadth of La Mancha—sights made more wonderful still by the fantastic vision which sees in the dust raised by two flocks of sheep approaching each other the semblance of two armies, with all their leaders and generals and emblazonments of arms—and discovers enchantment everywhere. But there is no doubt that, in most of their adventures, they are the sufferers, instead of the gainers; and Sancho suggests to his master at last that, this being

the case, it might be well "to serve some emperor or other great prince that makes war," instead of thus doing battle at his own risk, and in most cases paying for it in good honest blows. To this Don Quixote gives his assent, immediately proceeding to relate the effect produced by the entry into a new country of some celebrated warrior—the Knight of the Sun or the Serpent—and of the entertainment given him by the king, and the love bestowed upon him by the princess, and all the difficulties that come in the way of their union, which are at last happily surmounted. "Every whit of this will happen to yourself," says the believing Sancho, "without missing a jot, calling yourself the Knight[1] of the Rueful Countenance."

"'Never doubt it, Sancho,' quoth Don Quixote; 'for even in the very same manner, and by the same steps that I have recounted here, knights-errant do ascend, and have ascended, to be kings and emperors. This only is expedient, that we inquire what king among the Christians or heathens makes warre, and hath a faire daughter; but we shall have time enough to bethinke that, since, as I have said, we must first acquire fame in other places before we goe to the Court. Also, I want another thing, that, put case that we find a Christian or pagan king with a faire daughter, and that I have gained incredible fame throughout the wide world, yet cannot I tell how I might find that I am descended from kings, or, at the least, cousin-german removed of an emperor. For the king will not give me his daughter unless this first be very well proved, though my works deserve it ever so much: so that I feare to lose through this defect that which mine owne hath merited so well. True it is that I am a

[1] Shelton's translation is the Knight of the Ill-favoured Face; but here we permit ourselves the freedom of changing a manifestly faulty interpretation for one which is thoroughly well known at least.

gentleman of a known house of property and possession,—and perhaps the wise man that shall write my history, will so beautifie my kindred and descent that he will find me to be the fifth or sixth in descent from a king; for thou must understand, Sancho, that there are two manner of lineages in the world,—some that derive their pedigree from princes and monarkes, whom time hath by little and little diminished and consumed, and ended in a point like a pyramydes; others that tooke their beginning from base people, and ascend from degree unto degree, untill they become at last great lords. So that all the difference is, that some were that which they are not now, and others are that which they were not. And it might be that I am of those,—and, after good examination, my beginning might be found to have beene famous and glorious; wherewithall the king my father-in-law ought to be content, whosoever he were: and when he were not, yet shall the princesse love me in such sort, that she shall, in despite of her father's teeth, admit me for her lord and spouse although she knew me to be the sonne of a water-bearer. And if not, here in this place may quader well, the carrying of her away perforce, and carrying of her where best I liked; for either time or death must needes end her father's displeasure.'

"'Here comes well to passe,' quoth Sancho, 'which some damned fellowes are wont to say, Seeke not to get that with a good will, which thou mayest take perforce. I say it to this purpose, that if the king your father-in-law will not condescend to give unto you the princesse my mistresse, then there's no more to be done; but as you say to her, steale away and carrie her to another place: but all the harme is, that in the meanewhile that composition is unmade, and you possess not quietly your kingdom, the poore squire may whistle for any benefit or pleasure you are able to doe him, if it be not that the damzell of whom you spoke even now, runne away with her ladie, and that he passe away his misfortunes now and then with her, untill heaven ordaine some other thing; for I doe thinke that his lord may give her unto him presently, if she please to be his lawful

spouse.' 'There's none that can deprive thee of that,' quoth Don Quixote. 'Why, so that this may befall,' quoth Sancho, 'there's no more but to commend ourselves to God, and let fortune runne where it may best addresse us.' 'God bring it so to passe,' quoth Don Quixote, 'as I desire and thou hast neede of, Sancho, and let him be a wretch that accounts himselfe one.' 'Let him be so,' quoth Sancho, 'for I am an old Christian; and to be an earle, there is no more requisite.'

"'Ay, and 'tis more then enough,' quoth Don Quixote, 'for that purpose: and though thou werest not, it made not much matter; for I being a king, I may give thee nobility, without either buying of it, or serving me with nothing. For in creating thee an earle, loe, thereby thou art a gentleman: and let men say what they please, they must in good faith call thee right honourable, although it grieve them never so much.'"

This conversation is interrupted by the appearance of a new wonder on the way—"twelve men afoot, all in a row, one behind the other, like beads in a string, being linked together by the neck to a huge iron chain, and manacled besides. They were guarded by two horsemen armed with carabines, and two men afoot with swords and javelins." Sancho cries out, "Here is a chain of galley-slaves, forced by the king, going to the galleys!" The word "forced" (which has a double meaning, *gente forzada* being another name for galley-slaves) catches the ear of the knight-errant, who at once springs up to inquire into the matter. "If this be so," he says, "they come within the execution of my office, which is to undo force and succour the miserable." In spite of Sancho's protestations, he immediately addresses the officer in charge "with many courteous compliments," and requests permission to question the convicts, which is accorded to him. The prisoners give the best account

possible of themselves. One of them has done nothing more than carry off a basket of linen; another has been convicted only on his own confession, extorted by the rack; another is a venerable old man with a grey beard reaching to his waist; but the most dangerous of the band is a certain Gines de Pasamonte, who is heavily weighted with chains, of whom the guardians report that no prison or fetters will hold him—a philosophical rascal, who has written an account of his own eventful life, which he means to complete in the quiet of the galleys, and who argues boldly with the officer, desiring him to keep a civil tongue in his head, since his work is to lead them where the king has ordered, and not to insult them. The officer lifts his wand to strike the impudent prisoner, and Don Quixote's spirit is at once on fire. "Dear brothers," he cries, "I find that though you all deserve punishment, yet you are going to be punished against your will, because you cannot help it. Besides, it may be the want of money, or of resolution, or of friends, and not justice, which has pronounced your condemnation. Therefore, as heaven has sent me into the world to relieve the distressed, I take you under my protection." He then requests the escort to release the prisoners, a petition which they reject with scorn; upon which he "attacked the officer with such sudden and surprising fury," that he was speedily overthrown: and in the meantime Sancho, helping the desperado above named out of his chains, and the whole company aiding as best they could, the guards are soon disposed of, and the convicts set free. Sancho, much alarmed by this last feat, implores his master to take to the mountains, lest the guards should return reinforced, as they were pretty

sure to do. Don Quixote, however, pauses to make a speech to the liberated prisoners, commanding them to show their gratitude by proceeding in a body to Toboso, to present themselves before the lady Dulcinea still wearing their chains, to prove how great was their deliverance. When Gines and the rest decline to do this, our knight becomes somewhat unreasonably angry. "Now by my sword," he cries, "you, Sir Ginesello, or whatever is your name, shall go to Toboso alone, with your tail between your legs and all the chains on your back." The ungrateful rogue, making a sign to his companions, turns upon his liberator; and the end is, that Don Quixote and his faithful squire are stoned and robbed, and left helpless on the field of battle. For the first time Don Quixote, stung by their ingratitude, is forced to admit that to do kindness to rascals is like throwing water into the sea. Humbled by this sad experience, he then takes Sancho's advice, and consents to make his escape into the mountains, confessing that Sancho for once is right in his conviction that the troopers of the Holy Brotherhood (a sort of local volunteer army for the execution of the law), whom the routed guards may at any moment bring upon them, will care very little for the rules of knight-errantry.

The adventures in the Sierra Morena, to which the two now retire, are a mixture of genteel pastoral and the broadest farce. When our knight, recalling to himself another side of his profession which he has as yet scarcely thought of, resolves to emulate the madness of Orlando, or the melancholy of Amadis, by subjecting himself to all kinds of privations and going through all sorts of antics among the mountains, for love of Dulcinea, to whom he

sends by Sancho's hands a wonderful letter, the fun is of the wildest: till the real pilgrims of love—the distracted Cardenio and despairing Dorothea—come in to tell the stories of their respective misfortunes, and contrast a real romance in many complications with the fictitious one. Sancho in the meantime goes away to carry Don Quixote's letter, and to convey news of their adventures. There is here, however, jest within jest, since Sancho never receives the letter which he firmly believes himself to have lost, and of the delivery of which he frames a perfectly fictitious narrative. On his return to his master he is accompanied by the curate and the barber, in disguise, their aim being if possible to beguile the wanderer home. These two schemers take advantage of the meeting with Dorothea, and make her the instrument of their artifice, instructing her to appeal to Don Quixote as a distressed princess whose kingdom is oppressed by a giant. Sancho is first made the victim of this deception, into which he falls readily. His mind is, however, troubled at the moment by the idea that his master, instead of becoming a king or emperor, may be promoted to be an archbishop or cardinal, which will not suit the squire's purpose at all.

"'This faire lady, friend Sancho,' said the Curate, 'is heire-apparent by direct line to the mighty kingdom of Micomicon, and comes in search of your lord to demand a boone of him, which is that he will destroy and undoe a great wrong done to her by a wicked gyant; and through the great fame which is spread over all Guinea of your lord's prowess, this princess is come to finde him out.' 'A happy searcher and a fortunate finding,' quoth Sancho; 'and chiefly if my master be soe happy as to right that injury and redresse the wrong by killing that, oh the mighty lubber of a

gyant whom you say: yes, he will kill him, I am very certain, if he can once but meet him, and if he be not a spirit; for my master hath no kind of power over spirits. But I must request one favour of you, among others, most earnestly, good Mr Licentiate, and 'tis this—that to the end my lord may not take the humour of becoming a cardinal (which is the thing I fear most in the world), that you will give him counsel to marry this princess presently, and by that means he shall remain incapable of the dignity of a cardinal, and will come very easily by his empire, and I to the end of my desires; for I have thought well of the matter, and have found it is in no wise expedient that my lord should become a cardinal, for I am wholly unfit for any ecclesiastical dignity, seeing I am a married man; and therefore, to trouble myself now with seeking of dispensations to enjoy Church livings, having, as I have, both wife and children, were never to end: so that all my good consists in that my lord doe marry this princess instantly.'"

The lady is then led to Don Quixote, and kneeling before him, entreats him to deliver "the most disconsolate and wronged damzell that the sun hath ever seen."

"'I will not get up from hence, my lord,' quoth the afflicted lady, 'if first of your wonted bounty you do not grant my request.' 'I do give and grant it,' said Don Quixote, 'so that it be not a thing that turn to the damage or hindrance of my king, my country, or of her that keeps the key of my heart and liberty.' 'It shall not turn to the damage or hindrance of those you have said, good sir,' replied the dolorous damzell; and as she was saying this Sancho Panza rounded his lord in the eare, saying softly to him, 'Sir, you may very well grant the request she asketh, for it is a matter of nothing,—it is only to kill a monstrous gyant, —and she that demands it is the mighty Princess Micomicona, queen of the great kingdom of Micomicon in Ethiopia.' 'Let her be what she will,' quoth Don Quixote, 'for I will accomplish what I am bound and my conscience shall inform

me, conformable to the state I have professed.' And then turning to the damzell he said, 'Let your great beautie arise, for I grant to you any boon which you shall please to ask of me.' 'Why, then,' quoth the damzell, 'that which I demand is that your magnanimous person come presently away with me to the place where I shall carry you, and doe likewise make me a promise not to undertake any other venture or demand until you revenge me upon a traytor who hath against all laws, both divine and human, usurped my kingdome.' 'I say that I grant you all that,' quoth Don Quixote; 'and therefore, lady, you may cast away from this day forward all the melancholy that troubles you, . . . for by the helpe of God and that of mine arme, you shall see yourself shortly restored to your kingdome, and enthronized in the chayre of your ancient and great estate, in despite and mauger all the traytors that shall dare to gainsay it; and therefore, hands to the work, for they say that danger always follows delay.' The distressed damzell strove with much ado to kiss his hand; but Don Quixote, who was a most accomplished knight for courtesy, would never condescend thereto, but making her arise, he embraced her with great kindness and respect, and commanded Sancho to saddle Rozinante and helpe him to arm himselfe. Sancho took down the armes forthwith, which hung on a tree like trophies, and, searching the girts, armed his lord in a moment, who, seeing himself armed, said, 'Let us in God's name depart from hence to assist this great lady.'"

Delighted with their successful artifice, the cavalcade sets out on the road to Micomicon, which leads, it is needless to say, through the village in which is Don Quixote's home. Sancho, who has lost his ass, is the only one who has to go afoot.

"But all this he bore with very great patience, because he supposed that his lord was now in the way and next degree to be an emperor; for he made an infallible account that he would marry that princess, and at least be lord of Micomi-

con: but yet it grieved him to think how that kingdome was in the country of black Moores, and that therefore the nation which should be given him for vassals should be all blacke; for which difficulty his imagination coyned presently a good remedie; and he discoursed with himself in this manner: 'Why should I care though my subjects be all black Moores? Is there any more to be done than to load them in a ship and bring them into Spaine, where I may sell them and receive the price of them in ready money? And with that money may I buy some title or office, wherein I may after live at my ease all the days of my life.'"

Sancho's anxious management how to make the best of the good fortune that is about to befall him, and his perfect unscrupulousness as to the means of realising it, as he trudges elated on his way after his master's magnanimous person, while the conspirators shake with laughter on their mules, and can scarce contain themselves, is one of those triumphs of easy and delightful invention which are possible only to genius. As they ride on Sancho gets a terrible fright by the resolution expressed by his master not to accept the hand of the beautiful princess, though he is so ready to kill her "gyant" for her.

"'I doe sweare,' he says, 'to go with you to the end of the world untill I find your fierce enemy, whose proud head I mean to slice off by the help of God. . . . And after I have cut it off'" (he adds, with modest constancy) "'it shall rest in your own will to dispose of your person as you like best. For as long as I shall have my memory possessed, and my will captived, and my understanding yielded to her, I will say no more; it is not possible that ever I may induce myself to marry any other, although she were a Phœnix.' That which Don Quixote had said last of all, of not marrying, disliked Sancho so much, as, lifting his voice with great anger, he

said: 'I sweare and vow by myselfe that you are not in your right wits, Sir Don Quixote; for how is it possible that you can call the matter of contracting so high a princesse as this in doubt? Do you think that fortune will offer you at every corner's end the like happe of which is now proffered? . . . In an ill hour shall I arrive to possess that unfortunate earldom which I expect if you goe thus seeking mushrubs at the bottom of the sea. Marry, marry out of hand, or the devill take you for me! Take the kingdome that comes into your hands, and as soon as you are king, make me marquis or admiral, and instantly after let the devil take all if he pleaseth.'"

The knight immediately knocks his faithful follower down for disrespect to his lady, and requests to know what but the power of Dulcinea making use of his arm as her instrument, will restore the princess to her kingdom, cut off the head of the giant, and make Sancho a marquis?—to which heroic questions the poor clown has no answer but to beg over again, with tearful vehemence, that his master will marry this lady rained down upon him by heaven, "else what good can you be able to do me?" says honest Sancho. "Then let any one judge whether I have not cause to complain." The amused spectators, listening and laughing, and the false princess herself who assists at this argument, make a background to these two grotesque but perfectly grave and serious personages, neither of whom sees anything like a joke in the matter. Thus they go on to the inn where Don Quixote had been knighted, and where the party are received with great civility—the others amusing themselves with the novel of the "Curioso Impertinente," of which an account is given in the previous chapter, while our knight reposes himself after all his

fatigues. But presently a great tumult is heard in his chamber; and Sancho, rushing into the room, announces that his lord has slain the giant, the enemy of the princess, and cut off his head at one blow. "I saw his blood run all about the house, and his head cut off, which is as great as a great wine-bagge," said Sancho. "I am content to be hewn in pieces," quoth the innkeeper, "if Don Quixote or Don Devil have not given some blow to one of the wine-bagges that stood filled at his bed's head," which proves to be the case. The unfortunate knight is found in his chamber half naked, as he has jumped out of bed, laying on round him with his sword. The curate and the barber bring a pitcher of cold water and throw it over him, which wakes him from this perilous dream. Sancho meanwhile looks everywhere in vain for the head of the giant. "If I cannot find it, mine earldom will dissolve like salt cast into water," he cries.

After this there are various other arrivals at the inn, the first being the lovers for whom Dorothea and Cardenio are respectively sighing — Don Fernando and Lucinda—upon which the two couples are happily completed. Another party is that of "a Christian newly arrived from among the Moores," accompanied by the beautiful Moor Zoraide. This personage relates to them all his story—that of the "Captive," already referred to — which is scarcely ended when, another band of travellers coming in, the Captive recognises a long-lost brother, who immediately provides for and acknowledges him, enabling him to marry his Moorish lady. These romantic episodes take up a great deal of

room, but merely detain us from the two principal figures with whom our interest lies. Sancho is heart-broken by the discovery that Dorothea is no princess, but a lady of more ordinary degree; but as it is agreed among them that the adventure is to be followed out to its end, the party set off again, keeping Don Quixote still in his illusion, that they may the better convey him home. Many accidents, however, occur to retard this happy conclusion; and at last, after various contrivances, the benevolent conspirators hit upon an elaborate expedient. They have a cage made, to be carried upon a waggon, into which, disguising themselves as imps and spirits, they carry the unfortunate knight,—a mysterious voice explaining to him as he goes, in the most high-flown allegorical style, that this is done by magic, that his great enterprise may be the more speedily ended — and adding promises to Sancho, to keep him in good humour, of the fulfilment of all his hopes. Don Quixote takes this extraordinary step of the enchanter who protects him, as he has taken those of the wicked enchanters who have so often wrought him harm, with quaint and solemn docility, and sits with his hands tied—for so the oracle has recommended —in the most complete patience, as the oxen step slowly forward and the huge machine jolts along. But Sancho is sceptical. He believes in his master's prowess, and in the Princess Micomicona, and devoutly in his own advancement; but these enchantments he cannot swallow. He comes to the cage where his master sits patient, and declares to him that the phantoms are not orthodox. "How can they be orthodox," cries Don Quixote, "when they are devils? Touch them, and you will find they

have no bodies, but are made of air." "I have touched them," cries honest Sancho, "and this busy devil here that is fiddling about is as plump as a capon." But his master's soul is above these prosaic reasonings; nor can Sancho persuade him even when he confides to him the discovery he has made, that two of the spirits are neither more nor less than the curate and barber. Don Quixote smiles superior upon his rude yet faithful companion, and assures him that such an illusion as this is quite within the power of magic. He gets out of his cage, however, at Sancho's solicitation, and while thus temporarily released, gets involved in two other unfortunate encounters, which fairly break his spirit. "Good Sancho," he says at last, "help me back into the enchanted car; for I am not in a condition to press the back of Rozinante." The remainder of the journey home is then peacefully accomplished in the car, under charge of the curate and the barber in their proper persons. And thus the First Part of 'Don Quixote' comes to an end.

CHAPTER VII.

'DON QUIXOTE'—PART II.

THE concluding words of the First Part of Don Quixote's history are these: "He [the writer who has interpreted the preceding tale "with long vigils and much trouble"] intends to bring to light one day the third sally of Don Quixote."

"*Forsi altro canterá con miglior plectro.*"

The quotation (from Ariosto) is badly spelled, as by one who had half forgotten the original, "*forse altri canterá con miglior pletro;*" but it seems already to promise not a continuation only, but a loftier strain. A long time elapsed, however—no less than ten years. The first part of 'Quixote' had flown over the world, into translations, into many editions at home; from the king to the peasant everybody had read it. A universal laugh had rung through Spain, and indeed over the Continent. But there were some who laughed with little goodwill. The romancers, and dramatists, and *literati* who abounded in Madrid and other polished cities felt that they were involved in the broad and expansive ridicule which not only did all but sweep the extravagant literature of

chivalry out of the world, but handled the drama so dear to Spain with audacious freedom; and after various flings, both public and private, at the bold writer—who, dauntless in his obscurity, had not hesitated to laugh at the best of them, as he laughed at himself and his own dearest self-deceptions—one man at last ventured upon the bold enterprise of taking up Cervantes's uncompleted work, and making his own idea and hero the occasion of an assault upon himself. We have no space here to enter into the history of the spurious Quixote. Cervantes was, it is believed, already far advanced in the composition of the latter part of his great work when he was suddenly forestalled, as the writer no doubt hoped, by this publication. It bore on the title-page the name of the Licentiate Alonso de Avellaneda, a name as fictitious as the book. The reader, however, will hardly care in such a work as this to enter into the question of the writer's identity, or decide, among other little known names, whether Luis de Aliaga is the most probable perpetrator of this literary outrage. Posterity has not regarded the matter with any great interest, though two or three perverse critics in different ages have made an attempt to hoist Avellaneda up to the level of the great genius whom he parodied and defamed. A piracy of this kind, embittered by a preface full of personal hatred, in which Cervantes is upbraided with his poverty, with his want of friends, and even with the loss of his hand, is not worthy of much consideration. It shows, however, the undercurrent of literary spite which was flowing strong in his own country against the bold and laughing critic. Probably its appearance quickened the publication of the real conclusion of 'Don Quixote,' in the preface to which

Cervantes comments at some length, but with great moderation, upon his assailant. The reader, he says, will naturally expect an outburst of vituperation, and that he should call his anonymous parodist ass, fool, and madman.

"No—let his own rod whip him; as he hath brewed so let him drink" (says the offended gentleman): "and yet there is something which I cannot but resent, and that is, that he notes my age and my lameness, as if it had been in my power to hold time backe that it should not pass upon me, or as if my maiming had befallen me in a tavern, and not upon the most famous occasion which either the ages past or present have seen. . . . Well" (he adds, addressing that gentle and courteous reader who has been at all times the author's resource and consolation), "if thou chance to light upon him and know him, tell him from me, that I hold myself no whit aggrieved at him: for I well know what the temptations of the devil are; and one of the greatest is when he puts it into a man's head that he is able to compose and print a book by which he shall gaine as much fame as money, and as much money as fame."[1]

This was the retort which Cervantes made to so elaborate an attack. His hands were very full in these years, the last of his life. He had published his eight comedies and his "Exemplary Novels" between the two instalments of 'Quixote.' And in the Second Part, according to his promise, he had struck a higher note, dropping much of the grotesque machinery of the former,

[1] We may note here that the second part of the translation, published under Shelton's name, yet presented to the great personage to whom it is dedicated by the publisher Edward Blount, without any reference to the author, is inferior in style, and occasionally in accuracy, to the first part, and that we have here and there altered an expression to bring it closer to the original.

and disclosing in a more befitting atmosphere the noble soul of his magnanimous hero. Perhaps Cervantes's need of laughter at himself and all his misadventures, at the vanity of human undertakings in general, and the folly of human thoughts, had in a great degree exhausted itself, notwithstanding that the laugh remains ever about his lips; and it is evident that his Knight of the Rueful Countenance had become dear to him. A hundred fine and noble things that Cervantes had to say, come to his hero's lips. He does not make Don Quixote sane,—a restoration so very little to be desired,—but he expands his thoughts, and makes more visible the fountain of pure sentiment and fine humanity which was always in him. And Sancho, too, grows upon us as we wander once more with him by all the roads of La Mancha, and watch his puzzled advances in the way of wisdom, and preparations for that government in which he never loses his sublime faith.

The Second Part opens with the apparent convalescence of our knight, whom the curate and the barber watch closely, though keeping apart, lest they should put him in mind of his past adventures. But by-and-by, going to see him, they find him "sitting up in bed, clad in a jacket of green baize and a red Toledo bonnet, so dried and withered up in flesh that he looked like a mummy," but notwithstanding, "reasoning on every subject with so much discretion," that it was impossible to doubt his sanity. They test him upon a number of subjects, and at last turn the conversation to politics, and make him acquainted with "the news from the Court, how the Turke was come down with a powerful army, that his designe was not known, nor where such

a cloud should discharge itself, but that all Christendom was affrighted; likewise, that his Majesty had made strong the coasts of Naples, Sicily, and Malta." This is ticklish ground, and at once brings out the knight's weak point. He receives the news with great interest, and approves of his Majesty's preparations, but adds that, "if my counsel might prevaile, I would advise him to use a precaution which he is far from thinking on at present." He hesitates, however, to say what this is, though he declares that it is "neither impossible nor frivolous, but the plainest, the justest, the most manageable" that could be thought of. At last he is persuaded to disclose his plan.

"'Body of me!' said Don Quixote, 'is there any more to be done than that the king cause proclamation to be made that at a given day all the knights-errant that rove up and down Spain repaire to the Court? and if there come but half-a-dozen, yet such a one there might be among them as would destroy all the Turk's power. For pray observe well what I say, gentlemen; do you think it is strange that one knight-errant should conquer an army of two hundred thousand fighting men as if all together had but one throat? . . . I hope Providence will in pity look down upon this people; and send, if not so brave a champion as those of old, at least some one who may rival them in courage. God knows my meaning: I say no more.' 'Alas!' quoth the niece at this instant, 'I will lay my life that my uncle has still a hankering after knight-errantry.' 'I will die a knight-errant,' said Don Quixote, 'let the Turk march where he pleases and with as great a force as he can muster; again I say, God knows what I mean.'"

While this conversation is going on, arrives Sancho to inquire after his master, who is very badly received by the women, and only admitted at Don Quixote's special

desire. The knight is anxious to hear what the gentry round, his neighbours of the better sort, say of him and his expedition, of which Sancho gives no very good report; but he adds that a certain Bachelor from the University of Salamanca, the son of one of the villagers, had brought a report that it has been made into a book, of which all the world is talking. Don Quixote's interest being warmly excited, Sancho immediately brings the bachelor Carrasco to speak for himself, who assures the pair that it is really so, and that they have become universally celebrated: Don Quixote has gained the palm from all the knights-errant that ever lived, and Sancho is the second person in the history. "Though others will not sticke to say you were too credulous to believe that your government of the island offered you by Don Quixote might be true:"—

"'There is yet sunshine upon the walls (the day is not over),' quoth Don Quixote, 'and when Sancho comes to be of more years, with the experience of them, he will be more able and fit than now to be a governor.' 'By the Mass!' said Sancho, 'if I be not fit to govern an island at these years, I shall never govern though I live to be as old as Methusalem. The mischief is that the said island is delayed, I know not how, and not that I want brains to govern it.' 'Leave all to God, Sancho,' said Don Quixote, 'for all will be well, and perhaps better than you think for.' ''Tis true indeed,' said Samson, 'for if God will, Sancho shall not want a thousand islands, much less one.' 'I have seen,' said Sancho, 'governors in the world that are not worthy to wipe my shoes, and yet are called "your honour," and served upon plate.'"

Carrasco's account of the book, however, delights them both, though they endeavour to conceal their satisfaction. "Children handle it, youngsters read it, grown men under-

stand it, and old people applaud it," he says. "In short, it is so universally thumbed, so studied and known, that if the people do but see a lean horse they presently cry, 'There goes Rozinante.'" Both master and man are much stimulated by this account, and Sancho in particular is disposed to be defiant of the supposed Moor who is making money by him and his master. "Let Mr Moore mind his business," he cries; "for, my life for his, I and my master will start him with such a heap of stuff in matter of adventures and odd chances, that he will have enough, not only to write a second part, but a hundred. . . . If my master would be ruled by me, we had been in the field by this time, undoing of misdeeds and righting of wrongs, as good knights-errant use to do." Sancho indeed becomes loquacious and argumentative in his eagerness; and in the colloquy with his wife that follows, Cervantes forestalls his critics with mock scepticism, and calling himself the "translator of the history," protests that he thinks this chapter must be apocryphal, since Sancho speaks so much above his natural capacity. In short, the elation and self-satisfaction of the squire are one of the chief features in the Second Part. His former adventures have thoroughly awakened his rude but shrewd and subtle spirit, which, though entirely matter of fact, is yet full of a keen natural cunning which supplies what in a higher nature would be imagination. The gross yet astute clown, honest and faithful, though a knave, and ready to take advantage of every chance of self-enrichment, a rustic sage though a credulous fool, is the very impersonation of the peasant of the Latin races. Our own development is a different one. The English clown is too heavy, the Scotch countryman too much

touched by intellectualism and education. But Sancho's is the racy nature that knows nothing and cares less about reading or writing. The proverbs that well to his mouth as naturally as water from a fountain are the oral wisdom of the countryside, beaten by experience and shrewd observation out of brains like his own. These proverbs occur sparingly in the first part of the history. In the second, Sancho scarcely ever opens his mouth but he delivers himself of several of these pithy sayings. He has a proverb for everything.

The first mission of the pair on their new setting out is a visit to the shrine or palace of the peerless Lady Dulcinea, which is all one long artifice on the part of Sancho to conceal from his master that he has never in reality seen this paragon of loveliness. The reader will remember that he was specially sent by the deceived knight on a mission to the Lady Dulcinea which he never executed, although he had not hesitated to give his master an entirely fictitious account of his reception. "Nothing," says Don Quixote, "makes knights-errant more hardy, than to see themselves favoured by their mistresses."

"'I believe it,' quoth Sancho; 'but I doubt you will not speak with her, at least not see her, when you may receive her blessing, if she give it you not from the mud-wall where I saw her the first time when I carried the letter, and the news of the mad pranks which you were playing in the heart of the Sierra Morena.' 'Were those mud-walls in thy fancie, Sancho,' quoth Don Quixote, 'where you saw that never-to-be-sufficiently-praised gentleness and beauty? they were not so, but galleries, or corridors, or terraces, or whatever you please to call them, of rich and royal palaces.' 'It may be so,' said Sancho, 'though so far as I can remember they seemed to me mud-walls.' 'Yet let's go thither,' quoth

Don Quixote; 'for so I see her, let them be mud-walls or windows, all is one; whether I see her through a chink or through garden lattices: for each ray that comes from the sun of her brightness to mine eyes, will lighten my understanding, and strengthen mine heart, and make me sole and rare in my wisdom and valour.'"

They reach Toboso in the night, and wander about the sleeping houses, not knowing which is that of Dulcinea. The only shadow sufficiently important to be that of his lady's palace which Don Quixote discovers, turns out to be the shadow of the cathedral; and at last Sancho, who all this time has been on thorns, persuades his master to repose himself in an adjacent wood while he goes alone to find out the house. During this interval, while his master "stayed a-horseback, easing himself on his stirrups, and leaning on his lance full of sorrowful and confused thoughts," Sancho has time to concoct his plan. His musings are as follows:—

"This master of mine, by a thousand signs, is a Bedlam, fit to be bound; and I come not a whit short of him, but am the greater fool of the two to serve him,—if the proverb be true that says, 'Like master like man;' and another, 'Tell me with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee who thou art.' He being thus mad, then, and subject out of madness to mistaking of one thing for another, to judge black for white and white for black, as appeared when he sayd the windmills were gyants, and the friars' mules dromedaries, and the flocks of sheep armies of enemies, and much more to this tune—it will not be hard to make him believe that some husbandman's daughter, the first we meet with, is the Lady Dulcinea; and if he believe it not, I'll swear it, and so I will stand to my tackling, come what will on't."

Thus the poor knight is taken in the snare of his own imaginations. Sancho goes back to him full of import-

ance, to announce that the Lady Dulcinea and two of her ladies are coming out to meet him, "adorned like herselfe, she and her damzels a very blaze of gold, hung with ropes of pearls, rubies, and cloth of gold." Three country lasses, riding cavalier-fashion upon their asses, now become visible, whom the cunning Sancho points out to his master.

"'Where are your eyes that you see them not coming, shining as bright as the sun at noone?' 'I see none,' said he, 'but three wenches on their asses.' 'Now God keep me from the devil!' quoth Sancho, 'and is it possible that these hackneys, or how call you 'em, as white as a flake of snow, should appear to you to be asses?' 'Well, I tell you, friend Sancho, 'tis as sure they are asses as that I am Don Quixote de la Mancha, and thou Sancho Panza: at least to me they seem so.' 'Peace, sir,' said Sancho, 'and say not so, but snuff your eyes, and reverence the mistress of your thoughts, for now she draws neere;' and so saying he advanced to meet the three country girls, and alighting from Dapple, took one of their asses by the halter, and fastening both his knees to the ground, said, 'Queen and princess and duchesse of beauty, let your haughtiness and greatness be pleased to receive into your grace and good liking your captive knight, that stands yonder turned into marble, all amazed and with his heart standing still to find himself before your magnificent presence. I am Sancho Panza, his squire, and he is the way-beaten knight, Don Quixote de la Mancha, otherwise called the Knight of the Rueful Countenance.'

"And now Don Quixote was on his knees by Sancho, and beheld with unglad and troubled eyes her that Sancho called queen and lady; but seeing he himself discovered nothing in her but a country wench, and not very well-favoured, he was in some suspense, and durst not once open his lips."

The women, thinking this extraordinary proceeding a joke, return some coarse badinage and ride off, Dulcinea tumbling off her steed, but recovering herself and vaulting upon it again in the manliest way, while her bewildered devotee is left lamenting this worst spite of all that his enemies the enchanters have done him. "How much enchanters do hate me!" cries the unfortunate knight. "And see how far their malice extends, and their aime at me, since they have deprived me of the happiness I should have received to have seen my mistress in her true being." "Oh dismall and ill-minded enchanters!" cries wicked Sancho, "I would I might see you strung up together;" and he gives his master a description of the beauty of the lady, with her hair like bright gold, and a certain mole upon her lip which enhances her loveliness. "I believe it, friend," says the poor knight, sighing; "for nature could form in Dulcinea nothing that was not perfect and complete. But tell me, Sancho, that which seemed to me a pack-saddle, was it a plain saddle, or a saddle with a back?" he asks, faintly. "It was," said Sancho, "a Ginette saddle with a field-covering, worth half a kingdom for the richness of it." "And could not I see all this?" cries the unfortunate knight; "I am the unhappiest man alive." Malicious Sancho finds it all he can do to restrain his laughter at the success of his trick; and the enchantment of the Lady Dulcinea, who is prevented by magic from showing herself to him in her proper shape, becomes henceforward Don Quixote's prevailing grief. Sancho gravely laments the inconvenience that this enchantment may occasion when his master overcomes in fight the next "gyant" or knight and sends them to

present themselves before his lady, when they may have "to go staring up and down Toboso" without being able to find her. But Don Quixote thinks it possible that the enchantment may not extend to any but himself; and here this mournful conversation ends. The knight recovers his tranquillity only when what seems "a rare and dangerous adventure" dawns upon him. This, however, comes to nothing: it is a party of actors disguised as devils, angels, &c., whose explanation Don Quixote receives, benignly suffering them to continue their way unmolested. At night, however, a real adventure arrives in the shape of a rival knight-errant, who disturbs them as they are about to settle down to their rest under an oak-tree. The two brothers in arms make friends, upon the score of their respective loves, and the squires upon their hardships and hopes, the attendant of the new-comer confiding in Sancho — who immediately makes him aware of his expectations in respect to the island —that his master has promised him a canonry. The conversation of Sancho and his new companion, though full of wise saws, ends in a debauch; but the knights, as they walk apart comparing experiences, come at last to a dreadful discovery. The new knight has been ordered by his lady not to see her face again until he has conquered all the knights-errant in Spain; but what he most boasts himself upon is, that he has conquered the so famous knight, Don Quixote de la Mancha. This brag fills our knight with fury, as may be supposed, and they rouse their snoring squires and prepare themselves for mortal combat. The new knight has his armour covered with looking-glasses, which make a great show in the sun, but he refuses to show his face. They then mount

their horses and charge each other; but the knight of the looking-glasses is unable to get his horse into motion, and Don Quixote, running at him, overthrows his adversary at a blow. Sancho then unlaces his helmet to see if he is dead, when the adventurer is disclosed as the bachelor Samson Carrasco, while his squire, disguised with a false nose, is another fellow-villager. Here again, however, Don Quixote is willing to believe in the agency of enchanters, and sends off his vanquished adversary to present himself to Dulcinea, assuring him that though he has the appearance of Carrasco, he does not believe that it is really he—an opinion in which Sancho doubtfully agrees. The Bachelor has come after Don Quixote with the purpose of overcoming, and thus, humouring his fancy, sending him home; but the reader is disposed to rejoice that, in this purpose, the benevolent and overclever conspirator fails.

After this our knight encounters a discreet and amiable gentleman, with whom he rides along in much friendly and learned discourse upon poetry and other lofty subjects,—for though this discreet gentleman of La Mancha is much puzzled by his companion's appearance, and by his account of himself as a knight-errant, yet he finds Don Quixote's conversation so full of good sense and admirable sentiment, that they soon become friends. Here, however, a real and terrible adventure befalls. As they ride along the way, a waggon appears, decorated with little flags of the national colours, which they ascertain, when it comes up to them, to contain two lions, which are being sent from the general at Oran to the king. When the waggoner entreats the knight to give way and let them pass, Don Quixote smiles at his folly. "Speak

of lions to me!" he cries; "those who sent them here shall soon find out if I am a man to be frightened of lions: open the cages and let them out, that they may know who Don Quixote de la Mancha is." The spectators scatter on all sides with the utmost alarm, and all try to dissuade him from this folly.

"'Lookye here,' said Sancho, 'here's no enchantment; for I have looked through the grates and chinks of the cage, and have seen a claw of a true lion, by which claw I guess the lion is as big as a mountain.' 'Thy feare at least,' sayd Don Quixote, 'will make him as bigge as half the world. Get out of the way, Sancho, and leave me; and if I die in the place, thou knowest our agreement—repayre to Dulcinea: I say no more.' . . . He of the green coat would have hindered him; but he found himself unequally matched in weapons, and thought it no wisdom to deal with a madman, for now Don Quixote appeared no otherwise to him, who, hastening the keeper afresh, and reiterating his threats, made the gentleman set spurs to his mare, and Sancho to his Dapple, and the carter to his mules, each of them striving to get as farre from the cart as they could before the lyons should be unhampered."

Sancho rides away weeping, but still punching his ass's sides to get off the faster; while Don Quixote, after much consideration, gets off his horse, lest Rozinante should swerve before such enemies. When all are out of harm's way, the keeper very reluctantly sets open the cage.

"The keeper, seeing Don Quixote in his posture, and that he must needs let loose the male lion, on paine of the bold knight his indignation, he set the first cage wide open, where the lion, as is said, was of an extraordinary bigness, fearful, and ugly to see to. The first thing he did was to tumble up

and down the cage, stretch first one pawe, and rouse himself; forthwith he yawned, and gently sneezed; then with his tongue, some two handfuls long, he licked the dust out of his eyes and washed his face; which done, he thrust his head out of the cage, and looked round about him, with his eyes like fire-coals—a sight and gesture able to make temerity itself afraid. Only Don Quixote beheld him earnestly, and wished that he would leap out of the cart, that they might grapple, for he thought to slice him in pieces. But the generous lyon, more courteous than arrogant, neglecting such childishness and bravado, after he had looked round about him (as is said), turned his back and showed his tail to Don Quixote, and very quietly lay down again in the cage. Which Don Quixote seeing, he commanded the keeper to give him two or three blows to make him come forth. 'No, not I,' quoth the keeper; 'for if I urge him I shall be the first he will teare in pieces. I pray you, Sir Knight, be contented with your day's work, and tempt not a second hazard. The lyon's door was open; he might have come out if he would; but since he hath not hitherto, he will not come forth all this day. You have well showed the stoutnesss of your courage: no brave combatant, in my opinion, is tyed to more than to defy his enemy and to expect him in the field; and if he, contrary, comes not, the disgrace is his, and he that expected remains with the prize.' 'True it is,' said Don Quixote: 'friend, shut the door, and give me a certificate, in the best form you can, of what you have seen me to do; to wit, that you opened to the lyon, that I expected him, and he came not. . . . Shut (as I bad you), whilst I make signs to those that are fledde.'"

Perhaps Don Quixote is a little too much elated by this achievement; but it must be remembered that most of the previous ones had ended badly for him. "If his Majesty chance to ask who did it," he said, "tell him the Knight of the Lyons,—a name which I intend henceforth to take up instead of that of Knight of the Rueful Coun-

tenance." While this conversation is going on, that same discreet cavalier of La Mancha, Don Diego, who had accompanied our knight on the way, and who now comes back, the danger being over, stands by in great confusion of mind, not knowing what to decide in respect to Don Quixote, whose mixture of madness and wisdom bewilders him. His perplexity is so great that he rides on in silence, not knowing what to say. Don Quixote perceiving this, addresses to him the following fine defence of his knight-errantry: "No doubt you must take me for a madman," he says; "and no marvel that I be held so, for my actions testifie no less; but for all that, I would have you know I am not so mad as I seem."

"It is a brave sight to see a goodly knight in the arena, before his prince, give a thrust with his lance to a fierce bull. And it is a brave sight to see a knight, armed in shining armour, passe about the tilt-yard, at the cheerful jousts, before the ladies; . . . but a knight-errant is a better sight that, by deserts and wildernesses, by cross-ways and woods and mountains, searcheth after dangerous adventures, with a purpose to end them happily and fortunately, only to obtain glorious and lasting fame. A knight-errant, I say, is a better sight succouring some poor widow in some desert, than a court-knight courting some damozell in a city. . . . For the knight-errant, let him search the corners of the world, enter the most intricate labyrinths, every foot undertake impossibles, resist the sunbeams in the midst of summer, and the sharp rigour of the windes and frosts in winter. Let not lyons fright him, nor spirits terrify him, nor hobgoblins make him quake; for to seek these, to set upon them, and overcome all, are his prime exercises. And since it fell to my lot to be one of the number of these knights-errant, I cannot but undergoe all that I think comes within the jurisdiction of my profession. So that the encountering these lyons did

strictly belong to me, though I knew it to be an exorbitante rashnesse; for well I know that valour is a virtue between two vicious extremes, as cowardice and rashnesse; but it is less dangerous for him that is valiant to rise to a point of rashnesse than to fall or touch upon the coward."

A still finer description of a knight-errant's qualifications he gives, on his arrival at the house of Don Diego, to the son of that discreet gentleman, who has a mind to investigate in his turn the vagaries of the extraordinary wanderer whom his father brings home. The youth himself is a *soi-disant* poet, and submits to his visitor a prize composition—a "gloss" upon a poetical theme—with all gravity, while prepared to ridicule the folly of the knight. "Knight-errantry is as good as your poetry, and somewhat better," Don Quixote says; and so enlarges upon the purity and generosity, as well as the knowledge and instruction, necessary to this strange profession, that the young man cries out, "If this be so, I say this science goes beyond them all." As Sancho develops in the Second Part into a far more complete and individual personage than the typical clown of the First, so Don Quixote increases in every page, with a certain stateliness and conscious dignity and philosophical perception of his own position, which was wanting in the beginning. His mind is not less disordered upon one point, but his disorder is accompanied by so many noble thoughts and wise conclusions, that the ludicrous and grotesque gradually die away from the record, and we no longer hear of those beatings and belabourings which made so great a part of the fun of the earlier part. The spectators now do not laugh, but gaze at him with a wonder which is half respect and half pity.

The reflections which come so naturally to his lips are full of refined sentiment and the wisdom of a contemplative mind. His very folly is lofty and generous. Sancho himself, who has so often gaped at his master's nonsense, now gapes at his wisdom. "The devil take thee for a knight-errant, how wise he is!" he cries. "On my soul, I thought he had known only what belonged to his knight-errantry; but he snaps at all, and there is no boat he hath not an oar in."

We pass over the long episode of Comacho's wedding —a lively and graphic chapter of contemporary Spanish life, with a romantic pastoral story woven into the record of the good cheer, and Sancho's delight in it; nor need we linger upon Don Quixote's mysterious visit to the cave of Montesinos, and all the wonderful things he saw there —the good knight Durandarte, and that faithful friend who

> "Cut his heart from out his breast,
> That Bellerma, wretched lady,
> Might receive his last bequest"—

mixed up in the true fantastic fashion of a dream, with the three country lasses whom Sancho had presented to him as Dulcinea and her companions, and other irrelevant topics. His narrative puts Sancho's credulity to the severest test. "The devil take me," cries the bewildered squire, "if I believe a word of all this!" and Cervantes pauses solemnly to inform the reader that though to think Don Quixote would lie, being the worthiest gentleman and noblest knight of his time, is not possible—"for he would not lye though he were shot to death with arrows"—nevertheless the reader must judge for himself as to the truth of the adventure,

which "when he was upon his deathbed he disclaimed, and said that he had only invented it." "If it is apocryphal," he adds, "the fault is not mine; so that leaving it indifferent I here set it down." After this the travellers pass on to where another adventure, perfectly authentic this time, awaits them: when they come to the next inn (which to Sancho's great satisfaction his master treats as an inn, and not a castle) they are entertained with a puppet-show, in which is enacted the story of Don Gayferos and the lady Melisendra. The lady, who is the daughter of Charlemagne, is imprisoned by the Moors while her husband is in France. She is shown at a window in a town looking out for deliverance; then insulted by a Moor; then escaping out of a window, where she is caught by her mantle, and would be lost but that Gayferos at the moment comes by, and liberates her, and putting her behind him on his horse, rides off with her towards France; but, alas! they have been seen, and the alarm is sounded and the bells rung. Here Don Quixote interposes to tell the interpreter of the puppets that "the Moores have no bells, but kettle-drums and a kind of shaulms"—but this detail is decided to be without importance; and now the company are called to see a troop pouring out of the palace in pursuit of the lovers, so many and swift that there is little fear they will be overtaken and brought back; but this the excited spectator cannot endure.

"Don Quixote seeing and hearing such a deal of Moorisme and such a coyle, he thought it full time to succour those that fled; so standing up he cried out, 'I will never consent while I live that in my presence such an outrage as this be offered to so valiant and so amorous a knight as Don

Gayferos. Stay, you base scoundrels! doe not ye folloe or persecute him: if you doe, you must wage warre with me.' So doing and speaking, he unsheathed his sword, and at one spring got to the stage, and with a swift fury he began to rain strokes upon the Moorish puppets, overthrowing some and beheading others, maiming this and cutting that to pieces, and amongst other blows he fetched one so downright, that had not Master Peter tumbled and squatted down he had broken his head as easily as if it had been made of marchpane. Master Peter cried out, saying, 'Hold, Signior Don Quixote—hold! and know that those you hurle down are not real Moores, but shapes made of pasteboard. Look you, look you now, wretch that I am, he spoils all and undoes me!' But for all this Don Quixote still multiplied his slashes, doubling and redoubling his blows. And in a word, in less than two *Credos*, he cast down the whole show. King Marsillius was sore wounded, and the emperor Charlemaine his head and crown were parted in two pieces. The whole audience was disturbed: the ape got up to the top of the house, and so out at the window; and even Sancho himself was in a terrible perplexity, for (as he sware after the storm was past) he never saw his master so outrageous. The general ruin of the show thus accomplished, Don Quixote began to be somewhat pacified, and said, 'Now would I have all those here at this instant before me, that believe not how profitable knights-errant are to the world; for had I not been now present, what, I marvel, would have become of Señor Don Gayferos and the faire Melisendra? I warrant, ere this those dogs would have overtaken them and showed them some foul play.'"

It is almost impossible not to see in this, as most critics have seen accordingly, a burst of humorous recollection on the part of Cervantes of his own determination in his hot youth to destroy all that "Moorisme," the Turk and all his works. In what a fine alembic the passion of his youth must have been distilled to

leave nothing but this soft laughter! though perhaps it is the only time that we find Cervantes laughing (at himself) to the edge of tears. Don Quixote exhibits the change in him by making a stately and grave, if somewhat abashed, apology. "Verily, my masters, you that hear me, I tell you that all that here passed seemed to me to be really so, and that Melisendra was Melisendra, and Don Gayferos Don Gayferos. And this it was that stirred up my choler." Notwithstanding this confession, he sighs by-and-by, declaring that he would give five pounds to anybody that would tell him "that the lady Melisendra and Don Gayferos were safely arrived in France amongst their own people."

After one or two other adventures which we need not enter into, a great piece of good fortune happens to the knight and his squire. They perceive in the distance a hawking-party surrounding a beautiful lady upon a milk-white palfrey, to whom Don Quixote immediately sends Sancho, begging permission to pay his court and kiss her beautiful hands. "Take heede," he says, "how thou speakest; and have a care thou mix not thy embassage with some of these proverbs of thine." "As if it were now the first time that I have carried embassies to high and mighty ladies!" cries Sancho, indignant.

"Sancho went on, putting Dapple out of his amble into a gallop, and coming where the faire huntress was alighting, he kneeled down and said: 'Faire lady, that knight you see there, called the Knight of the Lyons, is my master, and I am a squire of his called Sancho Panza. This said Knight of the Lyons, who was once called the Knight of the Rueful Countenance, sends me to tell your greatness: That you be pleased to give him leave, that with your liking, goodwill, and consent, he put in practice his desire, which is no other

(as he sayes and I believe) than to serve your high-flown beauty; and if your ladyship gives him leave you shall doe a thing that may redound to your glory, and he shall receive a remarkable favour and pleasure.' 'Truly, honest squire,' said the lady, 'thou hast delivered thy embassage with all the circumstances that such an embassage requires. Rise, rise; for the squire of so renowned a knight as he of the Rueful Countenance (of whom we have heard special notice), 'tis not fit should kneele. Rise up, friend, and tell your master that he come near in God's name, that the duke my husband and I may doe him service.'"

How Don Quixote "pranked him in his saddle, sat stiffe in his stirrups, fitted his vizor, roused up Rozinante" for such an encounter, the reader will not need to be told;—and now for the first time the wandering pair are fooled to the top of their bent. The duke and duchess are deeply learned in the first part of their history, and receive them with delight. While the knight makes his compliment to the fair huntress as "the Queen of Beauty and Princess of Courtesy," the duke interposes—

"'Softly, Signor Don Quixote de la Mancha,' quoth the duke, 'for where my Lady Dulcinea del Toboso is, there is no reason other beauties should be praised.' Now Sancho was free from the stirrup, and being at hand, before his master could answer a word, he said: 'It cannot be denied but affirmed that my Lady Dulcinea del Toboso is very fair, but when we least think then goes the hare away; for I have heard say that she you call Nature is like a potter that makes vessels of clay, and he that makes a handsome vessel may also make two or three or a hundred. This I say that you may know my lady the duchess comes not a whit behind my mistress the Lady Dulcinea del Toboso.' Don Quixote turned to the duchess and said: 'Your greatness may suppose that never any knight in the world had such a prater

to his squire, nor a more conceited,[1] than mine; and he will make good what I say, if your highness shall at any time be pleased to make triall.' To which quoth the duchess, 'That honest Sancho has his conceits I am very glad, a sign he is wise; for your pleasant conceits, as you very well know, rest not in dull brains.'"

Thus the merry party rides off, the duchess requiring Sancho to ride by her,—a desire he is delighted to comply with, no false modesty ever keeping him back. The fun and graphic life of the narrative of their reception at the house of the duke is delightful. The honours paid to the knight-errant, which he accepts in all their extravagance with the most admirable gravity and calm, with a modest appreciation of the fact that these honours are paid rather to his office than himself, and are of the highest fitness and right: the staring wonder and quaint comments of Sancho, often so sharply true in their disguise of stolid simplicity and rustical long-windedness; the matter-of-fact fury of the chaplain, unable either to see the joke or to contain his spitefulness at the favour shown to the strangers; the tricks of the attendants, who are more sharp-witted; and the enjoyment of the hosts,—are set before us in the most genial detail. Don Quixote, however, though always stately and dignified, and delivering his little orations with a charming air of benignant gravity, is much annoyed and kept in continual hot water by Sancho's freedoms, which the duchess protects and encourages. The duke, more self-restrained, devotes himself to Don Quixote, who, on

[1] The word here used is *gracioso*, the name applied to the privileged buffoon or jester in Spanish comedy, and better translated as a man of conceits, as the duchess puts it,—the recognised meaning of the word in Shelton's time—which is the evident meaning of Don Quixote.

being questioned, gives a tragical account of the enchantment of Dulcinea, which sets his entertainers scheming, and lays him open to their mischievous devices. But though Don Quixote is served with fantastic devotion after the strictest rules of the laws of knight-errantry, Sancho is the hero of the situation. It is he that has always the best in every encounter. The knight submits with sublime patience to the scrubbing and scouring of his beard, which the audacious maids substitute for the usual hand-washing, and which the courteous duke causes to be repeated upon himself, lest his visitor should suspect the trick; but Sancho, bursting into their presence with a train of noisy kitchen-knaves at his heels, resists and refuses, making the august hosts ashamed of themselves. "So far the customs of great men's houses are good as they give no offence," says Sancho; "but these kind of ceremonies and soapings, do you see, look more like flouts and jeers than like a civil welcome to strangers." He is the chosen companion of the duchess's retirement in the afternoon, and reveals to her and her women all the undercurrents of his master's story and his own expectations. "How!" says the duchess; "if Don Quixote de la Mancha is such a madman, and Sancho Panza his squire knows it, and yet for all that serves and follows him, and relies on his vaine promises, doubtless he too is a madman like his master, and it will be unfit for my lord the duke to give him an island to govern."

"'By'r Lady,' quoth Sancho, 'if I had been wise I might long since have left my master; but 'twas my luck and my misfortune. I must follow him. We are both of one place. I have eaten his bread—I love him well; he gave me his colts; and, above all, I am faithful, and nothing can part us but

the grave. And if your Altitude will not bestow the government upon me, with less was I born,—and perhaps the missing it may be better for my conscience; for though I be a fool, yet I understand the proverb that says, the ant has wings to do her hurt, and Sancho the squire may sooner goe to heaven than Sancho the governor. Here is as good bread made as in France. In the night all the cats are the same colour; and unhappy is that man who has to break his fast at two of the clock in the afternoon; and no man's stomach is a hand's-breadth bigger than his neighbour's; and however big it is, there is always straw and hay to fill it; and the little birds of the field have God for their provider; and four yards of Cuenca cloth keep a man warmer than four yards of fine Segovia; and when we leave this world and are put below the earth, the prince goes in as narrow a way as the day-labourer, and the Pope's body takes no more room than the sexton's. When we come to that all are equal, or are made so; and good night.' . . .

"'Let me say again, if your ladyship will not give me the island for being a fool, I know that I would not give myself anything for being a wise man. And I have heard it said that the devil is behind the cross, and all is not gold that glitters.'"

This philosophical attitude of mind has its due effect upon the duchess, who assures Sancho that the duke, who has promised him the government, will certainly keep his word, and that he must take care to govern well.

"'As for governing,' said Sancho, 'that does not trouble me, for I have always been charitable and compassionate to the poor, and scorn to take the bread from him who has made it; but, by my holidam, they shall play me no false play! I am too old a dog to be caught by their crusts, and let me alone to keep the cobwebs out of my eyes. I know where my shoe pinches. This I say, that the good shall have with me both hand and heart, but the wicked shall have

neither footing nor entrance. And methinks in this matter of government, the beginning is everything; and I will lay my life that as simple as Sancho sits here, in a fortnight's time he will manage ye this same island better than the husbandry to which he was born.'"

Sancho, it is clear, is thus in a fair way for advancement; and very shortly after his appointment as governor of the island of Barataria is finally given to him. In the meantime, however, the great people get a good deal of amusement out of the knight and his squire, who are fooled on all sides, yet never at a loss, accounting for the wonders that happen to them with the most serious confidence that nothing can be more natural. Don Quixote's sublime and melancholy faith in the devices of the enchanters is not more profound than Sancho's puzzled credulity, even in respect to the enchantment of Dulcinea, which is his own invention, but of which, nevertheless, he gradually becomes convinced in spite of himself. The first of the solemn hoaxes of which the guests of the duke and duchess are the victims is a great pageant, in which Merlin, attended by other lesser necromancers, bringing a beautiful lady in an enchanted car, supposed to be Dulcinea herself, appears with much music and commotion before the castle; and it is announced that when Sancho shall have voluntarily given himself three thousand lashes, the lady will be free—a condition which naturally Sancho regards with no sort of satisfaction. "She may even lie bewitched to her dying day for me," he cries in dismay; but afterwards is persuaded to a reluctant consent. "If you do not relent, you shall have no government," says the duke; "no stripes, no island." This pageant is so successful, that the clever

steward, who has himself personated Merlin, is charged with the invention of another, and produces a certain Countess Trifaldi, called the Disconsolate Duenna, who comes to seek the succour of the famous knight Don Quixote de la Mancha. She tells him of her distresses, which can only be remedied by himself in single combat with the giant Malambruno, who is the cause of all her woe. Candaya, from which she has come, and where alone this giant is to be encountered, is, however, five thousand leagues off—although, it is explained, by riding through the air in a direct line the distance is lessened, and is not above three thousand two hundred and twenty-seven, a trifling journey when taken upon the back of a certain horse of singular qualifications. Don Quixote is all impatience for the arrival of this horse, that he may at once meet the giant and deliver the lady; but Sancho, whose presence is again declared indispensable, is by no means so ready. "I am no witch," he cries, "to ride through the air on a broomstick;" and bethinking him of his approaching dignity, "what will my islanders say when they hear their governor is flying like a paper kite?" The duke, however, once more insists upon the fulfilment of this condition, and Sancho has to consent ruefully. At the last moment Don Quixote desires to say a word with him in private.

"'My dear Sancho,' said he, 'thou seest we are going to take a long journey; thou art no less sensible of the uncertainty of our return, and Heaven alone can tell what leisure or conveniency we may have in all that time. Let me therefore beg thee to slip aside to thy chamber as if it were to get thyself ready for our journey, and there presently despatch

me only some five hundred lashes on account of thirty-three hundred thou standest engaged for.' 'I wonder you are not ashamed, sir,' cried Sancho. 'I am just going to ride a bare board, and you ask me to flay myself first. Come, come, sir, let us do one thing at a time.'"

The knight is obliged to be contented with his promise to work at the disenchantment of Dulcinea afterwards, and the pair mount blindfolded upon the wooden steed Clavileño—the spectators all calling out good wishes and encouragements. "Speed you well, brave knight! Heaven be your guide, undaunted squire! Now, now you fly aloft!" Sancho is much surprised that the voices do not become less distinct as they ascend; but Don Quixote gravely explains that "in these extraordinary kinds of flight" natural laws are suspended, and many strange things happen. The pair carry on one of their usual conversations while they make their supposed ascent —Don Quixote mildly instructive and full of historical-chivalric knowledge, which Sancho's matter-of-fact comments bring out in full absurdity. At a given signal the tail of the horse, which is full of squibs, crackers, and other fireworks, is set fire to, and explodes, throwing the knight and squire upon the ground somewhat bruised and greatly wondering—where they find a scroll announcing that Malambruno is satisfied, and all wrongs are redressed. Needless to say that they have not moved from the garden all the time; that the supposed flight has been merely in their fancy; and that their talk, so admirably unconscious, has gone on, as it was intended to do, in the hearing of the delighted conspirators. Notwithstanding this, however, Sancho, on being interrogated, gives a wonderful account of the vicissitudes of

the journey; and Don Quixote is also vaguely aware of certain things having happened. Sancho, for his part, professes to have been almost cured of his earthly ambition by this wonderful pilgrimage. "Since I came down from heaven," he says, "whence I saw the earth so very small, I am not half so hot as I was to be a governor."

"'For what greatness can there be in being at the head of a puny dominion that is but a little nook of a tiny mustard-seed? And what dignity and power can a man be reckoned to have in governing half-a-dozen men no bigger than hazel-nuts? No; if your grace would throw away upon me never so little a corner in heaven, though it were but half a league or so, I would take it with better will than I would the largest island on earth.' 'Friend Sancho,' answered the duke, 'I cannot dispose of an inch of heaven, for that is the province of God alone; but what I am able to bestow I give you—that is an island.' . . . 'Well, then,' quoth Sancho, 'let me have this island, and I will do my best to be such a governor that, in spite of rogues, I shall not want a small nook in heaven some day or other.'"

At last we arrive at the island and its government which has been vaguely before us for so long, but which, now that it has come, surprises neither Sancho nor his master, who take it as the most simple matter of course. Don Quixote, however, when Sancho is about to set out, takes him into his chamber and gives him the most admirable advice. "I give infinite thanks, friend Sancho," says he, "that before I have received any good fortune thou hast mette with thine. I, that thought to have rewarded thy service with some goode-luck of mine, to have saved that labour, and thou suddenly, past all expectation, hast thy desires accomplished." He then shows him how to conduct himself

in his government, expounding his duties to him, from the foundation of all wisdom in the fear of God, down to the care of his own person. Among other things he is to avoid proverbs.

"'Only God can remedy that,' says Sancho, 'for I have more proverbs than a book can hold, and when I speak, they come so thick to my mouth that they fall out and strive with each other which shall come first; . . . but I will have a care hereafter to speak none but shall be fitting to the gravity of my place: for in a full house the table is soon laid; and he who works by the piece[1] has no time to shuffle the cards; and he is in safety who rings the church-bells; and his judgment's rare who can spend and spare.' 'So, so,' said Don Quixote, 'go on, pour them out, thread them together; no one can stop thee. I bid thee leave thy proverbs, and in an instant thou hast cast out a whole litany of them, having as much to do with what we are talking of as with last year's snow.' . . . 'Sir,' quoth Sancho, 'I see well that you have told me nothing but what is good, holy, and profitable, but to what purpose if I remember nothing? True it is that of not letting my nails grow; and to marry again if I have the occasion, I shall not forget: but for all the other big words, puzzles, and jumbles, I cannot remember them no more than last year's clouds. Therefore I pray you, let me have them in writing, for though I can neither read nor write, I will give them to my confessor, that he may put them into use in case of need.' 'Oh sinner that I am!' said Don Quixote, 'how ill it appears in a governor not to read and write!' 'I can set to my name,' said Sancho; 'for when I was constable of our town I learnt to make certain letters such as are set to mark trusses, which they said spelt my name. Besides, I will feign that my right hand is hurt, and

[1] The translators of 'Don Quixote' have varied the proverbs, adopting the English equivalent, or even substituting distinctly English proverbs—a proceeding which we have thought it best to alter, by translating them direct from the text.

so another shall sign for me; for there's a remedy for everything but death; and since I bear sway I'll do as I list; for, according to the proverb, he that has the judge for his father goes safe to his trial—and I am governor, which is more than judge. No, let them backbite me if they will—let them come for wool, and I'll send them back shorn. Whom God loves, his house knows it; and the folly of the rich passes for wisdom in the world. So I being governor, and liberal, as I mean to be, they will find no fault in me. Daub yourself with honey, and you will never want flies. What a man has, that he is worth, as my old grandmother said.' 'A plague on thee, Sancho!' quoth Don Quixote; 'seven thousand devils take thee and thy proverbs!'".

Sancho departs in great state for his government, while Don Quixote remains at the castle, to be the victim of various other tricks, and to sustain (which he does with the most dignified modesty and constancy to his Dulcinea, yet with a knightly pity, worthy of Lancelot himself, for the despairing lady) the pretended love and serenade of Altisadora. "Alas," he sighs, "that I must be so unhappy an errant! that no damozell sees me but is enamoured of me!" yet shuts his ears and goes to bed, while the lovelorn maiden sings, with admirable self-restraint. In the meantime Sancho enters upon his government, which is a town with about a thousand inhabitants. He is received with ringing of bells and great show of delight.

"Finally, when he came out of the church, they carried him to the judgment-seat and seated him in it, and the duke's steward told him, 'It is an old custom, Sir Governor, in this island, that he that comes to take possession must answer to a question that shall be asked him that must be somewhat hard and intricate, by whose answer the town guesseth and taketh the pulse of their new governor's capa-

city, and accordingly is either glad or sorry at his coming.' Whilst the steward said this to Sancho, he was looking upon certain great letters that were written upon the wall over against his seat; and because he himself could not read, he asked what painting that was on the wall? It was answered him, 'Sir, the day is set down there in which your honour took possession of this island, and the inscription says, "This day, such a day of the month and year, Señor Don Sancho Panza took possession of this island: long may he enjoy it!"' 'And whom call they Don Sancho Panza?' said Sancho. 'Your honour,' quoth the steward; 'for no other Panza hath come into this island but he that is seated in that seat.' 'Well, mark you, brother,' quoth Sancho, 'there belongs no Don to me, neither ever was there any in my lineage. I am plain Sancho, my father was called Sancho, my grandfather and all were Panzas, without any addition of Dons or Donnas, and I believe this island is as full of Dons as it is of stones; but 'tis enough, God knows my meaning, and perhaps if my government last but four days to an end, I'll weed out these Dons that with their multiplicity do weary and trouble like mosquitoes. On with your question, Master Steward; I will answer you as well as I can, let the town be sorry or not.'"

The question, however, is never put, for applicants for justice pour into the place where Sancho is seated in his chair, and where the shrewd clown decides so wisely and with such intimate knowledge of the chicaneries brought before him, that all the bystanders are astonished. One of these cases is that of the man who has hidden the amount of his debt to the other, who sues him for it, in his staff, and handing it to his creditor to hold for him while he takes the oath, swears that he has given back the money,—an oath which is about to be accepted as putting the matter beyond dispute, when cunning Sancho seizes the staff, now restored to its owner, and finds the money in it, as he has divined—with other

equally happy intuitions. After this fortunate beginning he is led into a sumptuous palace, where a still more sumptuous meal is prepared for him and served by a number of obsequious servants.

"At his elbow there stood a certain personage, that after showed to be a physician, with a rod in his hand. . . . One that seemed to be a sort of student said grace, and a page put a laced bib under Sancho's chin, and another who did the office of carver set a dish before him; but he had no sooner eaten a bit than he with the rod touching the dish, it was very suddenly taken from before him; but the carver set another dish of meat before him. Sancho would have tasted of it, but before he could touch it, he with the rod was at it, and a page set it away with as much celerity as the other; which when Sancho saw he was amazed, and looking round on all who were by, asked if this dinner was to be like a juggler's game? To which he with the rod made answer, 'It must only be eaten, Sir Governor, according to the custom of the other islands that have governors. I am a physician, and am stipended in this island to be the physician of the governors of it; and I am much more careful of their health than of mine own: . . . and the principal thing I do is to be with them at meat, and to let them eat what I think fit for them, and to take away what I imagine may do them hurt, or be naught for their stomach; and therefore I now commanded the dish of fruit to be taken away because it is too moist, and the other dish because it was too hot, and had much spice that provoked thirst; and he that drinks much consumes the radical juices in which life consists.' 'In this manner,' quoth Sancho, 'yon dish of roasted partridges, in my opinion, well savoured, will do me no hurt.' To which said the physician, 'You shall not eat of that, sir, so long as I live.' 'Why so?' quoth Sancho. The physician answered, 'Because Hypocrates, our master, pole-star and light of physic, says in an aphorism of his, *Omnis saturatio mala, perdicis autem pessima:* the meaning is—all surfeit is ill, but

that of a partridge worse of all.' 'If it be so,' quoth Sancho, 'pray see, Master Doctor, which of these dishes will be most wholesome for me and do me least hurt, and let me eat of that without banging of it with your rod, for in good sadness I tell you plain I am ready to die with hunger; and to deny me my victuals, in spite of Master Doctor, let him say what he will, is rather to take away my life than insure it.'"

Nothing, however, pleases this difficult functionary, who suggests at last "some hundred of little hollow wafers [apparently a sort of macaroni], with some thin slices of quince." Poor Sancho gets no dinner, even though he indignantly dismisses his doctor and orders him to be put in prison; for the carver then suggests danger in the food, as having been sent from a convent —a curious reason—and Sancho is beside harassed by a despatch from the duke, and various other applications. He is promised, however, a good supper, and with this has to be content, though he reflects woefully upon the want of consideration with which he is treated. "Certainly," he says, "I find now that judges and governors had need be made of brass, that they may not feel the importunities of suitors that would at all hours and all times they should give them audience and despatch." However, in the round he makes by night and in the business of next morning (all the breakfast he is allowed to have is "a little conserve and a draught of fine water,"—poor Sancho!), he conducts himself with equal discretion and good feeling, and we are glad to hear is allowed a good dinner at last in spite of the doctor. The next seven days, during which, however, the new governor makes many admirable laws and regulations, are passed over lightly; but when we are brought

back to the detailed narrative of his doings, we find him in bed, "not cloyed with bread and wine, but with judging and giving sentences." Suddenly he is waked up by such a noise and tumult of cries, bells ringing, trumpets sounding, and people calling to arms, as he never heard before. This is the last trick of the many played upon him. The enemy, he is told, have entered the island, and all is lost unless his valour and skill save it: to which end they bind him between two shields, one in front and one behind, and putting a lance in his hand, exhort him to lead on; but poor Sancho, unable to move between the shields that imprison him, falls down, and is allowed to lie there amid all the tumult, beaten and trodden over, and hearing what he conceives to be the uproar of the fight all around him. It ends in shouts of victory, and he is bidden to rise and divide the spoils. But Sancho on being raised swoons away; and at last, coming to himself, adopts an entirely unexpected course.

"He asked them what o'clock it was? They answered him it grew to be day. He held his peace, and without more words began to clothe himself, all buried in silence; and all beheld him, wondering what would be the issue of his hasty dressing himself. Then by little and little (for by reason of his bruises he could not do it fast) he made himself ready, and so went towards the stable, all that were there following him; and coming to Dapple, he embraced and gave him a loving kiss upon the forehead, and not without tears in his eyes, said, 'Come thou hither, companion mine and friend, fellow-partner of my labours and miseries; when I consorted with you no other cares troubled me than to mend thy furniture and furnish thy little corps. Happy then were my hours, days, and years; but since I left thee, and mounted on the towers of ambition and pride, a thousand miseries, a

thousand toils, four thousand unquietnesses, have entered my soul.' And as he was thus discoursing, he fitted on the pack-saddle, nobody saying aught unto him. Dapple being thus saddled, with much ado he got upon him, and directing his speeches and reasons to the steward, the doctor, and many others there present, he said, 'Give me room, sirs, and leave to return to my former liberty; let me seek my ancient life to rise from this present death. I was not born to be a governor, nor to defend islands and cities from enemies that would assault them. I can tell better how to plow, to digge, to prune and plant vineyards, than to give lawes or defend provinces and kingdoms. 'Tis good sleeping in a whole skin. . . . A sickle is better in my hand than a sceptre. . . . Fare you well, sir, and tell my lord the duke that naked I was born, and naked I am. Without a cross came I to this government, and I go from it without a cross, contrary to what governors of other islands are used to do. Stand out of the way and let me go. I believe all my ribs are broken. I thank the enemy that trampled upon me all night.'

"'You shall not do so, Sir Governor,' quoth the doctor; 'for I will give you a drink, good against falls and bruises, that shall straight recover you. And touching your diet, I promise you to make amends, and you shall eat of what you list.' 'Tis too late,' quoth Sancho; 'I'll as soon tarry as turn Turke. These jests are not good the second time. . . . I am of the lineage of the Panzas, and we are all headstrong, and if once we cry odd, odd it is (though it be even), in spite of all the world. . . Like to like, every ewe with her fellow, and let no one stretch his leg further than the sheet will cover.'"

Thus rousing up so far as to give forth at last a few of his favourite maxims, Sancho leaves ambition behind him and goes back to his master. The reader is startled when he encounters the sudden pathos with which the clown's awakening touches the story,

and at the same time cannot but remark how much more clear and quick-sighted is the rustic than the deceived but always believing knight. "These jests are not good the second time," says honest Sancho. Don Quixote never gets so far. However, Sancho's brief authority stands him in much stead afterwards. He is as fond of referring to his governorship after, as he was to the promise of it before. "Such an island as you will scarce meet with the like," he says, describing it, "some two leagues off," to the first friend he meets. "Prythee do not talk so," replied Ricote; "islands lie a great way off in the sea; there are none of them in the mainland." "Why not?" says honest Sancho—which indeed is unanswerable.

With the end of Sancho's governorship, however, the interest of the book ends. Don Quixote indeed, and his squire with him, go through a great many more adventures; but the story-teller begins to weary of his subject, and the fun flags. When the knight and Sancho set out finally from the duke's castle, their adventures have the air of a postscript; and in the dearth of better matter, we hear a great deal about the fictitious Quixote, in respect to whom Cervantes at first had been so moderate and magnanimous. There is here and there a ludicrous touch of the old serious fooling, when Don Quixote seizes the opportunity of coaxing Sancho to give himself a few of those three thousand lashes which are to purchase the disenchantment of Dulcinea. It is generally by a quite unexpected turn, at an unguarded moment, that the knight essays to beguile him into this duty, which is finally performed by Sancho in a wood, chiefly upon the trees which surround him and veil his proceedings, al-

though his deceived master, standing at a distance and counting, believes them all to be upon his own back. And the conversations between the two still retain much of their wit and individuality. The last quotation we shall make will be Sancho's famous apostrophe to sleep, his genius for which was such that he usually "made but one nap of the whole night." Don Quixote takes it rather ill that he should sleep so soundly.

"'Whilst I am sleeping,' says Sancho, 'I know that I neither fear nor hope, nor toil nor glory. And blessed be he that invented sleep — the cloak that covers all human thoughts, the food that stayeth hunger, the drink that slaketh thirst: the fire that warmeth cold, the cold that tempers heat, and last of all, the universal money which buyeth all things, the scales and weights which make the shepherd equal with the king, and the simple with the wise: sleep hath only one evil thing, as I have heard, that it looks like death."

Don Quixote is at length met in single combat by a certain Knight of the White Moon, who overthrows him, and commands him to return home and stay there for a year, giving up all thought of knight-errantry for that period, as the penalty of his defeat. This knight, it is scarcely necessary to say, is our old friend the Bachelor Carrasco, whose failure as the Knight of the Mirrors has all this time been weighing upon his mind, but who does not rise in the reader's opinion in consequence of his meddlesome interference. Our knight goes sadly home, solacing himself for a time with thoughts of becoming a shepherd, and living a pastoral life of poetry and Arcadian simplicity under the name of the shepherd Quixotis, while Sancho is to be Panzino, and the other personages in the village are all to figure in

the pastoral. But when he gets back to his village his tone is changed. He falls ill, and comes to his sober senses, to our infinite regret, and dies as Alonzo Quixano the Good, mourned by all the neighbourhood. Thus ends the wonderful history of Don Quixote de la Mancha. If it had not been for the wretched traitor Avellaneda, it is very possible our knight might not have died; but it was necessary to put him out of the world, lest the scribbler who had so offended and maligned him might have contrived another and yet greater slander against our spotless knight.

After having so long borne them company by the way and through the cities, in their inns and villages and enchanted castles, it is almost with pain that we take farewell of this delightful pair. Their talks as they jog along, as they repose in the courtyard of the *venta* or under the oak-tree in the wood, are full of gentle wisdom and shrewd discernment, of magnanimous sentiment and racy scepticism, and the quaintest folly. There are no circumstances for which the one has not a piece of benign instruction, or the other a keen remark of worldly wisdom; but their individuality never gets the length of a trick or repetition, for even Sancho's proverbs are always fresh. There are, it must be allowed, a good number of those grossnesses which were thought no harm of, and belonged to the fashion of the time to be found in the book, but there is no vice, and the atmosphere is pure and sweet from all stain of immorality. Don Quixote is the most modest and constant of all the ornaments of knighthood; and Sancho, though with no pretence to virtue, has always an eye to his wife and children at home.

CHAPTER VIII.

HIS LAST YEARS.

Our space has not permitted us to indicate all the fine criticisms and trenchant satires upon the folly of the time, of which 'Don Quixote' is full. Laws, literature, the judge's bench, the seat of government, the theatre, great and small alike, come under his laughing comment. The duke and duchess who, notwithstanding all their kindness and courtesy, contrive a hundred cruel tricks in cold blood in order to amuse themselves with the folly of their guests, are as keenly touched, though perhaps not one reader in a thousand ever thinks of it, as is the silly and spiteful chaplain in the palace, or the foolish poets with their *gloses* and acrostics, or the dramatists who disregarded every rule of composition—more keenly indeed, in that their faults are shown in action, not described. And Sancho's administration, though it turns out so wise, is in itself not only the finest jest, but the biggest satire of all—a satire upon those appointments of unqualified favourites to great office which are, when they occur, the greatest scandals of public life. But to interest the reader in Spain, at this critical period of her history, and to interest him in the immortal knight

and his squire, are two very different things. The two men are perennial; they live as truly now as they did in old Valladolid near three hundred years ago—the one commending himself to our hearts by a hundred touches of congenial nature, the other always laughable, always genuine, far more real to us than half the people we meet daily. The number of those who care to go deeper will always be small, but Don Quixote and Sancho Panza can never have less than a world of admirers and lovers. Where they pass, there will ever be laughter and sympathy—the first infallible, the other according to the capacity of the reader. The most ignorant person who is within the range of education at all understands the allusions, of which all literature is full, to these two personages and their ways; and those who are without that range have perhaps a heartier delight still in the wonderful adventures which a child can understand, though a wise man cannot exhaust them.

But though this is the fact now, and Cervantes is universally regarded as the first of Spanish writers,—the representative in literature of that kingdom, the fine flower of her genius, the best illustrator of her national character,—it was not the case in the beginning of the seventeenth century, when he lived in those two little rooms in Valladolid, with all his flock of seamstresses around him, or when he returned to Madrid to a life equally obscure, and watched the world outside with eyes so keen, yet so full of humour and toleration. His friends were few and his means small. He had been seeking promotion all his life, and probably—what more likely?—had wearied out those who had promotion to give. He had criticised freely, and laughed much at all

the affectations of the time: and he was not a man to content himself in the atmosphere of a coterie; nor, in all probability, was the poor Government *employé*—the tax-gatherer and writer, with his pen at everybody's service—fine enough or genteel enough, though a hidalgo with blue blood in his veins, to be received into the superfine academies and poetical society of the time. Lope de Vega, who ought, one would think, to have known better, reckons among those poets "none so bad as Cervantes, and none so ignorant as those who praise 'Don Quixote,'" which is one of the most startling instances on record of the blindness of contemporaries; though it must be added that on other occasions he does his brother poet justice. It is scarcely credible that Cervantes, with all his good-humour and stout heart, could have been insensible to the neglect in which he was left, while so many petty creatures fluttered and flourished in the favour of the great. He was old and he was poor: but the last dozen years of his life, in which he seems to have had no other fixed occupation, were overflowing with literary energy; and his fancy caught at an occasion for giving a playful yet sharp stroke all round at those trifling competitors whom nobody knows anything about nowadays, but who at that moment were uppermost in society, and carried their heads much higher than the immortals.

This occasion is said to have arisen when his patron, the Conde de Lemos, to whom almost all the works published in his later years are dedicated, was sent as viceroy to Naples. This nobleman, who was a patron of letters, had, it seems, announced his intention of taking the best poets with him to his new court, and had charged the

brothers Argensola, both much esteemed in the poetical world, with the task of selecting them,—though it seems doubtful whether this did not mean merely that a preference was to be given to men of letters for the appointments in his suite. In any case, Cervantes was left out. He does not seem to have felt that the Conde de Lemos himself was to blame in the matter; but it seems very probable that some feeling of the neglect with which even his own friends ignored his claims, and natural wonder at the popular appreciation of all the small twitterings of verse that filled the air, moved him to the composition of the "Viage del Parnasso." In this long poem he describes himself as about to start on a journey to that classic mountain, and longing for a ship to convey him, when Mercury suddenly appears before him, sent to collect an army of poets to repulse the poetastry (*poetadumbre*), of the day, who are advancing upon Parnassus. The names of most of these songsters, though they are professedly the true poets of the time, have sunk into complete oblivion, and it is scarcely necessary here to enter into the long lists of nobodies. Cervantes playfully describes them as conveyed by Mercury to Parnassus in a ship all made of verses, the rowers being ballads, the mast a long and most mournful elegy. Into this ship the poets crowd; and when they put out to sea, clouds break over it, raining down more and more poets, to all of whom Apollo allots seats on their arrival, except to Cervantes alone, the "Adam of poets," whom, however, Mercury had already greeted in the most laudatory way. Cervantes, finding himself thus left out, without any place to seat himself, stands angry and unhappy, asking himself whether this last spite of fortune is pos-

silje. He then presents himself to Apollo, warning the god not to estimate him as one of the vain and vulgar crowd; and this is the only part of the strain which will much interest the reader, or which our space will permit us to quote. "I am he," he says, "from whose genius sprang the lovely Galatea. I produced the 'Confusa,' which held its place among the best, and other comedies that had acceptance in their time. I have given in 'Don Quixote' pastime to many a melancholy bosom. I have opened, in my novels, a road by which the Castilian tongue can show all its powers. From my tenderest years I have loved the sweet art of poetry. I have composed innumerable romances. It grieves me sore that I alone have to stand with no tree to lean against. With little can I be content, but much I desire." To this assertion of his claims Apollo replies blandly, admonishing him that his misfortunes have been partly his own fault, and bidding him, since he has no seat, to fold his mantle and seat himself on that. "It seems, señor," says Cervantes, "you have not perceived that I have no cloak." "Even if it be so, I rejoice to see you," says the god. This is all he has in acknowledgment of those great proofs of his genius. It was all Cervantes was to have in this life: no cloak—but the distinction of an isolated position, whether modesty, unworldliness, or neglect was the cause; no laurel or myrtle to lean his back upon, like the others, but at least the gracious approval of those who knew best. The battle between the good and bad poets, and the fine description of Poesia herself, and of Falsa Poesia, the bad genius, we have no space to indicate. The prologue of this poem, and the *Adjunta* which follows it, are full of character, and they

are brief enough for quotation. The former, indeed, is very brief. It is Cervantes's way of delivering his satire, with that laugh which is at himself as well as at his victims:—

"Curious reader, if thou art a poet, and this book comes to thy hands, if thou findst thyself in it noted among the good poets, give thanks to Apollo for the kindness shown thee: if thou findest not thy name, thou mayst still do the same; and God have thee in His keeping."

The *Adjunta* furnishes us with a graphic picture of the poetaster in full fig:—

"I remained for some days at home reposing after so long a journey, at the end of which time I sallied forth to see and to be seen, to receive the compliments of my friends and the scowls of my enemies; for although I do not think I have one, yet I am not certain to be thus exempt from the common lot. It happened that as I came out one morning from the monastery of Atocha, there came to me a youth, about twenty-four, more or less, fresh and elegant, and rustling in his silken attire, with a ruff so large and stiffly starched that it seemed to need the shoulders of an Atlas to carry it. Two flat ruffles, the children of this ruff, starting from the wrists, mounted and climbed, all quilted and goffered, to the top of the arm, as if they would assault the beard. . . . The size of the ruff and cuffs was so great that the ruff concealed and entombed the countenance, and the cuffs the arms. The youth approached me, and said, 'Is your honour by chance the Señor Miguel de Cervantes, just arrived from Parnassus?' At this question the colour forsook my face: I said to myself, 'Here is one of the poets who figure in my "Viage," and who has come to pay me what he thinks he owes me.' However, drawing force from weakness, I answered, 'I am he whom you say, señor; in what can I serve you?' The moment he heard this he opened his arms and threw them round my neck, and would have kissed me but that the size of his ruff prevented him."

This exquisite then informs Cervantes who he is: he is a poet, and his name is Pancracio de Roncesvalles. He is young, rich, and in love. He is equally attached to all the styles of poetry, but has chiefly given himself to the dramatic, and has written comedies, which, however, have not been represented, and pleased nobody. Pancracio, however, is the bearer of a letter to Cervantes from Apollo himself, which has been refused at Cervantes's door on account of the postage, half a real—that is to say, seventeen maravedis or farthings. This curious banter leads to the production of Apollo's charter of privileges to the poets of Spain. Every poet is bound by this to be of bland and suave disposition, but is privileged to show his rank by the slovenliness of his person as well as by the fame of his verses. It is also ordained that if any poet come to the house of a friend while he is at table, the poet, though he may swear that he has dined, is to be made to eat by force if necessary. Every poet is to be considered a gentleman by right of the generous profession he exercises. Every dramatist who has written at least three comedies is to be allowed free admission into all the theatres. The charter continues in this strain through many more items. Once more Cervantes's laugh peals to the skies—at himself above all, for who is so poor as he? at poverty, and ill-fortune, and adverse fate.

The life so full of neglect and suffering, so full of labour and trouble, was now, however, drawing towards its close. After the long silence of its middle period, these last years are full of continued literary activity; but it would seem as if it had been only when he had little else to do that Cervantes permitted himself to think of literature,

much less of fame. The First Part of 'Don Quixote' was published in 1605. Then ensues another long interval of nine years, which probably was still occupied by other work. In 1613, when he published the "Exemplary Novels," he was sixty-six, and his years were drawing to a close. In 1614 came the "Viage del Parnasso;" in the next year the comedies and the Second Part of 'Don Quixote,' one following upon another, as if he felt how little time now remained. Finally, he left behind him when he died the serious romance of 'Persiles,' one of the least known of all his works, of which he had made mention in his dedications both of the comedies and of the 'Quixote.' In the former of these he shows a mind still full of plans and eager purpose. "Don Quixote," he says to his patron, "is putting on his spurs to go and kiss the feet of your Excellency." "And there too," he adds, "will shortly go the great Persiles and the 'Weeks of the Garden,' and the second part of 'Galatea,' if my ancient shoulders can bear so great a burden." All that he did, however, was to complete "the great Persiles;" then the pen fell from his hand.

It would be vain in the small space at our command to attempt any description of this last work, which Cervantes evidently thinks of so much importance, and which Spanish students still applaud for its fine Castilian and its polished style, with that curious insistence and perverse preference of the small to the great, which is the temptation of the critic. In the edition before us, published in the beginning of this century, the editor assures us, considering "that in this fable the faults of style and construction which were perceptible in the

'Quixote' are corrected," that "the opinion cannot be held a rash one which, supported on many serious foundations, and agreeing with that of the author, considers this the most estimable of all his works." Very few readers nowadays will be disposed to do more than smile at this curious delusion. The wonder is how the author of 'Don Quixote,' in the last years of a life which had been so laborious, so full of activity and excitement, and after the composition of the great work in which he had shown the world how thoroughly he saw through it and all its ways, so that there was nothing that could be concealed from his keen, clear, smiling observation—could sit down, with all his wisdom and his experience, to weave out the long and lingering web of a romantic tale, wandering from one story to another, from one passion to another, as if there was nothing but sentiment and romantic incident in the world, no ludicrous side to anything. He whose sense of all the follies about him was so exquisite, surely must have smiled at himself as he wrote, at this last outburst of the romantic vein which went deeper than all the wisdom and the wit, and betrayed him once more, in spite of himself, into that fond wandering, that record of delicate adventure, that lingering sweetness of narrative. Were life long enough, and the world easy enough, and leisure as abundant as in the old Arcadian days, how pleasant to tread the never-ending labyrinth from one flowery way to another, and sail with the wandering princes from one isle to another, ever finding new histories, new perfections, generous hearts, and moving adventures everywhere! What impulse led him to bring his hero and heroine out of the far and unknown North—

Persiles being the son of the king of Iceland, and Sigismunda the daughter of the king of Friesland—we cannot tell; perhaps the mere caprice of invention, and the entire obscurity of these dream-lands, so lost among the fogs and snow. They wander wildly at first among undiscovered islands, picking up here and there in moments of necessity a kind barbarian who speaks pure Castilian, until Fortune brings them to sunnier regions, where the old poet, with a fond return upon his own youthful reminiscences, finds pleasure in leading them about the lovely coasts where he had travelled when he was himself a youth. The most interesting and wonderful thing about 'Persiles and Sigismunda' is, however, the fact of its composition. Though he was always poor, we are tempted to hope that 'Don Quixote,' and the Conde de Lemos, and that Illustrissimo the Archbishop of Toledo, to whom he refers as one of his best patrons, had made life more easy for him, and left his mind free to please itself with the idea of writing at last a perfect romance —a production more careful and exquisite than anything of which he had yet delivered himself. He evidently thought so; and it is all the more pleasant to the spectator to dwell upon this thought, that Cervantes had not the time to be disappointed in this last sanguine and fanciful hope. No critic vexed him, no light of reality came coldly upon the last delusion. It seems to have given him great happiness to have completed and left behind him this one monument of his genius, and it was published only after he was safely beyond the reach of all unkindly critics.

The preface and dedication of this work are, however, far more interesting than itself. The former gives us our

last glimpse of Cervantes in person. The latter, still more touching, leaves us almost his last words on earth. We cannot do better than conclude this little book with these final revelations. Sick and old, but always fond of movement and cheerful company, Cervantes had gone upon his long-stepping horse out to pleasant Esquivias, where were those vineyards and orchards which Donna Catalina had brought him as her marriage-portion, when the following scene occurred :—

"It happened one day, dearest reader, that two of my friends and I were coming from the famous town of Esquivias, famous for its illustrious houses and for its still more illustrious wines, when I heard behind me the hurried pace of one who desired to overtake us, and who presently called out to us not to go so fast. We paused, and soon there appeared a grey student mounted upon an ass ; for he was all clothed in grey, his gaiters, his round shoes, the point of his scabbard, his large collar, and his hair. . . . When he reached us he said, 'Your honours are going to seek some office or employment at Court, . . . to judge by your rapid riding ; for my ass is one that has often sung victory.' To which replied one of my companions, 'It is the horse of Señor Miguel de Cervantes, which is so long in the stride.' Scarcely had the student heard the name of Cervantes when, alighting from his ass, letting fall his portmanteau on one side and his cushion on the other, he turned to me, and trying to grasp me by my left hand, said, 'Yes, yes, it is the maimed giant, the famous above all fame, the happiest of authors, the joy of the Muses!' I who heard my own praises thus suddenly poured forth, felt that it would be discourteous not to respond, and throwing my arms round him (to the final destruction of the collar), said to him, 'This is an error into which many persons, affectionate but ignorant, are apt to fall. I am Cervantes, señor, but I am not the joy of the Muses, nor any of those fine things. Mount your

ass, and let us go on together in pleasant talk the rest of the way.' The gentle student did so, and we rode on slowly with loose reins upon our way. We then began to talk of my illness, and the student gave me my final doom, saying, 'This is the dropsy, which would drink all the water of the ocean without being the better. Your grace, Señor Cervantes, should drink nothing, but not forget to eat, which would cure you better than any medicine.' 'Many have told me this,' said I, 'but I like to follow my taste in drinking, as if for that only I had been born. My life is nearly over; according to my pulse, my course will not run further than to next Sunday, when all will be accomplished. In an unfortunate moment have we made acquaintance, for I have no time to show my gratitude for the goodwill you have shown me.' We then arrived at the Toledo bridge, where we went in, and he left us. That which will be said of my adventures is the affair of fame; my friends will have pleasure in saying it, and I more pleasure in listening. I embraced the kind student once more, he spurred his ass, and left me as ill disposed as he was badly mounted. This has given occasion to my pen to jest a little. But all days are not alike. The time will come, perhaps, when, joining again this broken thread, I may say that which fails me here. Farewell wit, farewell my pleasant jests, farewell my many friends! Dying, I carry with me the desire to see you soon again with joy in the other life."

Perhaps this was the last time he was ever on that high-stepping horse, among those gentle friends. Shortly after, he was so ill that the last sacraments were administered to him; and it was after this concluding solemnity of life that he wrote with his trembling hand these last words, his final dedication of his last work to his patron:—

"The ancient rhyme so celebrated in its day, which begins, '*Puesto yo el pie en el estribo*,' will come well I

think, in this letter, which I must begin almost with the same words—

> " ' My foot in the stirrup I place,
> The cares of death are round me,
> And thus I write to your Grace.' .

" Yesterday I received extreme unction, and to-day I write this letter. The time is short, pains increase, hopes fail, and with all this I give up life, desiring to have lived long enough to kiss the feet of your Excellency. So great was my content to hear of your safe return to Spain, that it almost gave me back my life. Since it is decreed that I must lose it, may the will of heaven be accomplished ; but at least your Excellency will believe in my longing, and know that you had in me so great a lover of your service that the desire almost conquers death. Notwithstanding, as in prophecy, I rejoice in your return, delight to see you pointed out to all, and rejoice still more to think that my great hopes will be fulfilled in the fame of your bounty. At the same time, there lingers in my heart certain relics and tokens of the *Semanas Del jardin* and of the famous *Bernardo ;* so that if yet by good fortune, which would not be fortune but miracle, God should still give me life, you shall see them, and the end of the 'Galatea.' May God have you in His keeping ! At Madrid, the 19th of April 1616."

On the 23d he died—nominally on the same day as Shakespeare ; though there is the difference of old style and new style which we would fain ignore. There is a pleasure in associating the two names, and turning in fancy from one deathbed to the other. One wonders if the two great figures might meet anywhere upon the unknown way.

Cervantes had entered the third order of St Francis several years before his death. He was buried in the convent of the Trinity, where shortly before his only

child had taken the veil; and was carried to his rest by the brethren of the order with his face uncovered, according to their custom. His wife died a few years later. When the nuns removed from their convent to another, it is supposed that the remains of Cervantes, not because he was Cervantes, but the father of Sister Isabel, were removed with them; but no one now knows where they lie. Spain had nothing to give, not even the vain honours of the grave, to her greatest son.

END OF CERVANTES.

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